



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

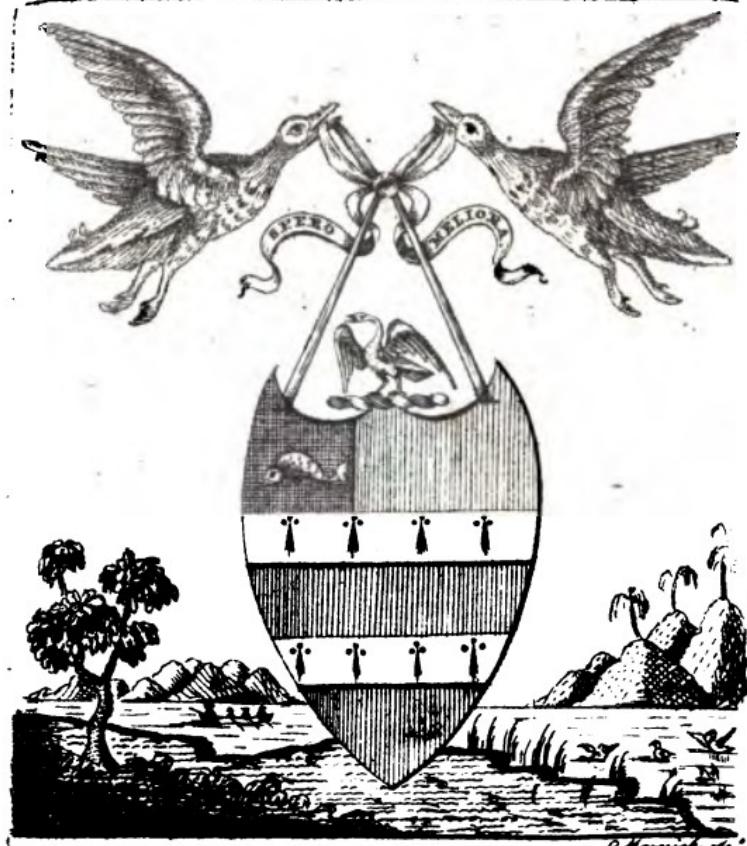
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

PL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



433 07496786 4

146 (2)



Francis Panton Jun^{rs}.









Pennyless
N.C.Z.

1

111

S E N T I M E N T A L
L U C U B R A T I O N S.

B Y

P E T E R P E N N Y L E S S, pse

NEW YORK
PRINTED
FOR THE
AMERICAN MARKET

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR T. BECKET, AND P. A.
DE HONDT, IN THE STRAND.

M DCC LXX.

AD
M.E.T.



LENOX LIBRARY
NEW YORK

Sentimental Lucubrations.

C H A P. I.

—Trifles, light as air,
Are to the jealous confirmations strong.

Dificulties, said I, are the inseparable attendants of human life, and seem to take a particular pleasure in perplexing the minds of the studious and thought-
ful.—Now the reason why I said this was, because I had long been determined to write, but could never come to any reso-
lution concerning the subject.

B

Nothing

Nothing, said a man who was talking to another as I turned the corner of a street, nothing hits the taste of the times that has not an air of novelty ; and however well a man treads in an old-beaten path, he may jog on there to his latest moment without being taken any notice of.—I took the hint.

It pleased me while I walked half the length of the Strand,—then I began to examine it. Novelties, said I, by the extraordinary demand of them, are almost exhausted ; every subject is treated upon by the learned and the unlearned, by the grave and the ludicrous ;—every thing doubtful is rendered still more so by a variety of sophistical arguments ;—even religion, and the way to heaven, are rendered intricate and perplexed by priest-

priestcraft, and wrong-headed zeal.— Volumes are piled upon volumes;—the world is a library; and the more a man reads, like a bird caught in a snare, the more he entangles himself.

These considerations, joined to several more of the same nature, did not a little perplex me; and in all probability would have determined me to have laid aside all thoughts of writing, had I not then begun to observe with what eagerness my countrymen, and more especially my fair countrywomen, pursued all manner of trifles;—how insatiable an appetite they had for them, and how glad they were to obtain them upon any terms.

This will do, thought I, so I will set to work, and compose one chapter upon trifles, if I should never proceed farther;

it will make an agreeable frontispiece to trifling work, and serve to pass an hour or two to a trifling reader. And besides, I flatter myself that it may enhance my value among people of taste and fashion, should it have the good fortune to prove as acceptable to them as every other thing of the same nature.

In the intervals of trifling and amusement, I know not what to do with myself, says one; how slowly time passes away, says another of my fair country-women; and really were it not for the kind assistance of trifles, life would be almost insupportable to many of the fair; for whom, as I have always a very tender regard, so it is chiefly for their benefit, that I have now undertaken the trifles

trifle away my time in writing a chapter upon trifles.

But not from the fair only, do I expect a favourable reception ; I hope also that this paper will be very graciously received by all the little chit-chat gentlemen of my own sex, whose constant employment is to trifle with themselves or other people from morning to night.— And I further desire and ordain, that no person, neither male nor female, who has ever indulged in any species of trifling, be audacious enough to criticize, or find any fault with this paper ; but that the world may not think that I intend in this manner to screen it from all manner of stricture, on the other hand I give a free and unlimited power to all those who have never sacrificed a few

minutes to this folly, to treat it with what severity they please.

If any person, while he is reading this or any of the following lucubrations, shall meet with any thing which he thinks applicable to himself, let him endeavour to make a proper use of it ; but let him by no means conclude, that the picture was originally drawn from his identical features ; for if he will take the trouble to look around him, he will find thousands more whom it resembles in many interesting circumstances.

But application to one's self is what very few people are guilty of ; on the contrary, most of us have an excellent knack at fitting the cap that was made for ourselves to the head of our neighbours, like a gentleman with whom

was

was in company a few nights ago, who has what is called a hard-favoured countenance, joined to the greatest good nature, and some little share of humour.

When we were all grown something mellow, it was proposed to fiew him a miniature picture which had a very great likeness to one of the company, and that he should either tell which of us it most resembled, or defray the expence of the night. He readily accepted of the proposal, and his own picture (previously taken for the purpose) was immediately produced. — He began to examine it, and soon discovered that it had the eyes of one, the forehead of another, the mouth and nose of a third, and the attitude of a fourth, and so on till he had found out something in which it resembled every one of

the company; without ever suspecting that it had any resemblance to himself, though it was acknowledged by every one who saw it, to be a very exact copy of the original.

If any person, in looking over the following lucubrations, shall, after his example, apply every thing he finds in them to his neighbour, I would recommend to him, in the first place, to consider whether something would not fit himself as exactly.

I am aware that some of the graver sort of two-legged animals, who imagine trifles altogether below their dignity, will be apt to look down with scorn and contempt upon essays, which have their exordium on a subject seemingly of so little importance; and I would advise

the

the dignitary, who sweats under a load of seeming importance, and who to support that importance, acts always by rules, and never by the feelings of nature, I would advise him to proceed no farther ; he will meet with nothing here that he will relish.

What a long story about trifles, said J, have I brought myself into ! I wish I may bring myself well out again ; for at some one period of life they get the better of almost every one ; and I have often seen people of the gravest deportment, and most penetrating judgement, who were able to manage the most arduous affairs, and to submit with calmness and serenity to the unforeseen accidents which sometimes rendered the best concerted schemes abortive ; intirely lose all
their

their philosophy and self-government, by a mere trifle happening to go wrong in their hands.—I would not have been angry, says one, had I been outwitted by a smart fellow; but to be bubbled thus by a fool, makes me lose all patience.—Had any business of importance, says another, proved too hard for me, I would not have thought so much of it; but I am mad with myself when I consider that one of the silliest trifles in the world has got the better of me.

But to proceed; what great mischief has been done by trifling differences in religion! how often has an opinion indifferent and unessential (I blush for human nature while I write it) when supported by blind zeal and enthusiasm, given rise to a party who have desolated nations by
fire

fire and sword, because they disagreed about trifles! while real religion, and every softer feeling which should adorn the human mind, were stifled by party rage and superstition.

Learning too, as well as religion, has suffered much from trifles. Have not the professors of every science, from a small difference of opinion, misunderstanding, or mere quibble about words, often abandoned the study of the sciences themselves, and prostituted their whole time and genius to the support of some chimerical hypothesis, and to inventing scurrility against every one who opposed it.

But the power of trifles appear nowhere more conspicuous than in the married state, which, when unhappy, is generally

nerally rendered so by some little insignificant thing, in which the husband was unwilling to indulge the wife, or the wife to submit to the husband. I once knew a virtuoso who sued for a divorce against his once-beloved rib, because she had inadvertently spoiled the wing of a dried butterfly; and another learned couple, who parted because the husband insisted that the word honour should be spelled with the vowel u, and the wife insisted that it should be spelled without it.

Let no man then think so meanly of trifles;—the half at least of the actions of life are nothing else, and therefore they deserve our serious attention; and the man who manages all the trifling circumstances well, which occur in his jour-

ney through life, acts no inconsiderate part ; and by so doing, will avoid many an unlucky rub which he would otherwise meet with, while he who reckons them below his notice, will in some period of his existence, find himself mistaken.

I might here mention a variety of great events which have been accomplished by the power of trifles, but shall content myself with a few ; as the saving of the Roman capitol by the cackling of geese, the flight of a whole army by the braying of Silenus's ass ; and, to compare great things with small, the setting the heads of the whole of his majesty's loving subjects in and about London agog, by knocking and scratching ; but examples of this kind are so common,

that

that every one's own observation will furnish him with enough of them.

Having now shewn that trifles have parted friends,—routed armies,—and turned the heads of kingdoms, I might still proceed to point out many more acts of their prowess; but I hasten to conclude this essay, which I shall do by taking notice of the slow, and almost imperceptible manner, in which they often sap the foundation of a man's fortune, and by slow and imperceptible degrees often bring him to a morsel of bread.

The case is a common one; a company of sober industrious people meet at a tavern, and when they have done their business, and are perhaps beginning to be a little mellow, one more sober than

the

the rest proposes to go home; we will not part without the other bottle, says a second; a third objects to it as superfluous and luxurious; pooh, says a fourth, what does it signify, it will cost but a trifle. The very sound of the word trifle silences all disputes; every one in the company persuades himself that he can spare a trifle as well as his neighbour, and so the bottle is voted in; and since it will only cost a trifle, another will only cost a trifle, and so on till they are at last surprised to find that the bill is no trifle.

The greatest part of us, in our private economy, are the dupes of trifles.—This additional piece of furniture, says one, will cost but a trifle;—to keep one or two servants more, and a table a little more elegant, says another, will cost but a trifle;

a trifle; — to have a more splendid equipage, says a third, will hardly stand me in as much as I have often thrown away for a bagatelle. But how often does the deluded trifler in this manner throw away all that he has, and at last finds a jail, the consequence of his repeated follies, to be no trifle.

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

Fix'd to no spot, is happiness sincere,
 'Tis no where to be found, and every where.

FR OM the earliest ages of the world, down to the present time, there has been one uninterrupted hue and cry after happiness.—It has constantly been in the mouth of every body, but in the possession of nobody;—and I dare confidently affirm, that he who talks most about it, enjoys the least share of it.

I have often seen boys of six or seven years old, run with eager haste to catch the rainbow painted on a neighbouring hill, and when disappointed of it there, would redouble their speed, and assure themselves that they would come up

with it on the next ; and I have no less frequently seen boys of fifty or seventy pursue happiness from scheme to scheme, with the same assurance, and with the same success.—Deluded mortals, have I often said to myself while I saw it ;—should we not learn to desist by disappointments ;—nay, they only whet our appetites, and therefore we are continually on the scent after, or on the actual prosecution of some plan, till death at last drops the curtain over the motley scene.

I have never yet met with any person who would allow that he was happy himself ; and very seldom with any who were not perfectly capable to teach me how I might be happy.—Tell me, Nature, for thou only can unravel the mystery

stery, tell me whence this inconsistency in the human mind ; and tell me further, why so many plans have been chalked out to teach the whole group of mankind to attain the most perfect happiness, by many on whom a beam of that celestial radiance hardly ever shone.

Mankind, according to their various prevailing inclinations, have always placed the possession of happiness in various points of view.—One man places it in power, because the exercise of power is to him the greatest pleasure he can possibly enjoy ;—another places it in grandeur for the same reason ;—a third, more moderate, reckons that it dwells with competency ;—and a fourth, still more moderate, searches for it in contentment : For my own part, conscious

of the insufficiency of all these schemes,
I laugh at their deluded followers.

Now laughing in our modern times is a very powerful method of making one abandon any thing, and especially if it be virtuous ; but I do not laugh at people pursuing happiness with any intention of this kind ;—I laugh to think that so long as any man devoted to power or grandeur sees another more powerful, or exhibiting more pageantry than himself, I laugh to think that he can never be easy in his mind :—and, with regard to competency, I laugh at the word, as it has no determined idea annexed to it ; and as one man would reckon that a competency, which another would not think sufficient to keep him from starving :—Contentment,—I will laugh at you too ; and

and the more I laugh at you, the more I find myself got into your favour ; although you seldom deign to bless the mind who seeks you with care and solicitude.

This will appear from a survey of mankind, from the king upon the throne to the beggar on the dunghill ; who are equally strangers to contentment, and among whom you will hardly find one who does not think his neighbour's lot happier than his own, or does not wish in some measure to alter or exchange his condition.

This disposition, widely different from contentment, is elegantly described by Horace, in his first satire, inscribed to Mecenas.

—Laudet diversa sequenter,
 O fortunati mercatores, graves annis
 Miles ait, multa jam fractus membra labore
 Contra, mercator, navim jactantibus austris
 Militia est potior.—
 Agricolam laudat juris legumque peritris,
 Sub galli cantum consultor ubi ostia pulsat
 Ille qui rure extractus in urbem est
 Solos felices viventes clamat in urbe.

From this it appears, that discontentment with our own condition is a passion that has long usurped a place in the human mind; and that all the rules laid down to teach us the art attaining contentment and happiness, are idle and unavailing;—for any share of these valuable blessings which can be enjoyed on earth, must flow from an innate principle of the mind; and a mind possessed of this principle

inciple will almost always be happy, independent of the circumstances and accidents of life which render other people more or less so; and when she is not possessed of it.

No circumstances can communicate happiness.

The most unsuspecting, and the most cheerful temper, indicate the happiest man;—but a cheerful temper cannot be acquired;—it is the gift of heaven;—and where heaven has implanted it,—it will often reside, in spite of every cross-accident that may attempt to dislodge it.

No man can afford a more convincing proof of this than Mr. S. who may literally be said to have come laughing through life, though he has met with as many rubs in his way, as would have

turned the laughter of the greatest part of his fellow travellers into mourning.

Young, full of philanthropy, with high passions, an easy temper, and a total unacquaintance of the world, he came into the possession of an ample fortune ; —this he soon dissipated in the gaiety of his heart, and has ever since been remarkable for smiling at almost every species of wretchedness.

A conduct so very uncommon has long astonished all who knew him ; —when I have asked him to explain it, —I am not able, has he often said, it is nature, and is neither drawn from religion, —from philosophy, —nor from reason ; —though I hope I am not without some share of each of them.

I have

I have always found, said he one time when we were conversing on that subject, I have always found that the more I endeavoured to reason myself into happiness, the more I have reasoned myself out of it.—During the time of my thoughtless festivity, my mind was too much occupied about maintaining a continual succession of pleasures to reason upon any thing ;—when I had spent, or rather foolishly thrown away all that I had, and was not only forsaken by, but even become unknown to all these who had long rioted in my abundance. I would gladly have begun to reason, but then,—every thing that happened to me appeared altogether irreconcileable to reason, and I might add,—to humanity.

Stripped

Stripped of every thing but the tattered remnant of a fine garment,—ashamed of every one, and every one ashamed of me, I fled from the place of my nativity ;—as I entered a small village in the west of England, an old man sat by the side of the way, who had lost a leg and an arm in the service of his country,—he rose up as I approached, and with a look and voice rather philosophical than dejected, begged that I would spare him a halfpenny, to enable him to obtain a place of shelter from the storm which was coming on.

Adversity, thou noblest instructor of the human heart, he who is incapable of learning at thy school, has a clay-cold heart, and will remain a stubborn and untractable clod, till he tumbles again into

into that inanimate mass from which he seems to have been erroneously separated ; — thou had begun to tutor me ; — thou had awakened my reflection ; — it was the first time that ever charity had warmed my heart ; — I put my hand into my pocket ; — it was the first time that I ever had nothing to give.—How unluckily are our abilities and our inclinations contrasted, said I ; so I walked away ashamed.—At another time I would have saved this blush, by saying I had no change.

While I rioted in abundance, I had always considered poverty as one of the greatest evils ; but having also considered myself as intirely out of its reach, I had rather despised than pitied those who felt it.—Nothing is more natural than to

change

change our sentiments with our condition.—Instead of disdain,—every soft emotion now arose in my breast ; and the first, and perhaps the greatest unhappiness ever I felt, was because I had nothing to bestow upon this poor man, whom I reckoned the most wretched of the species, as I concluded that he would inevitably perish for want of a lodging, which a few poor halfpennies of all that I had heedlessly thrown away might have purchased for him.

Self-love was totally absorbed in a stronger passion.—If you will not allow, ye critics, that there is any stronger passion, you must allow that another one can, at least for some time, thrust it out ; —for I seriously declare, that I never considered

fidered all this while that I could not purchase a lodging for myself.

While I was revolving in my mind what would become of him, he resumed his seat with an air of the most placid indifference, and wrapping himself in a tattered old cloke,—well,—said he, if I must lie without doors to-night, I have done so in many a colder one.—Here he began to hang down his head, his utterance seemed to fail him, and he added, Ay, but then I had many a brave fellow to accompany me ; whereas here I am like to be exposed alone to an——the rest was so low, that I could not hear it. When it was ended, he raised up his head, looked ashamed, as if he had done something below the dignity of human nature, and tried to resume his serenity.

There

There is often a je ne sçai quoi in the manner in which a speech is delivered, that conveys the sentiments of the speaker more home to the heart, than any form of words. The speech of the old soldier was of this nature ;—it convinced me at once, that poverty and happiness were not incompatible, although nature had for a few moments got the better of his resolution.

I had gone but a little way farther, when I heard a cobbler, who was covered with rags in a dirty stall, singing in a manner that shewed he understood a cheerful heart much better than the harmony of sounds.—Since I see, said I, that other people can enjoy as much felicity in poverty as is consistent with the present state of things, I make no doubt but

but I shall enjoy as much as my neighbours.

Nature now began to call aloud for the necessary supplies of existence.—I was stepping into a tavern, but just recollecting in the passage that I had no money.—A smart-looking waiter came up to me:—Sir, said he, what room would you choose to walk into? I had better walk out, thought I, so stepped toward the door.—I hope you are not affronted, Sir, continued he;—pray be kind enough but to look at them; I assure you there are not better rooms, nor better accommodation to be met with anywhere in town.

The transition of the mind is far from being so quick as that of the circumstances.—I had been too newly initiated
into

into poverty to have become able to beg my lodging.—I will go back, said I, and lodge by the way-side with the old soldier; we seem to be of similar tempers, and if we cannot make a hearty meal and a warm bed together, I am persuaded we shall at last assist each other to laugh at the instability of fortune.

I walked back in a pensive and melancholy manner; for I am no stoic, and have all the feelings of humanity about me; though the natural gaiety of my heart is such, that I can never be depressed above a few hours together by the most untoward accident.—The old soldier arose when I drew near him;—I laughed, because I expected he would accost me for another halfpenny.—Sir, said

said he, I have been thinking of you ever since you passed this way ; your behaviour then, and your returning now convince me, that your mind is not at ease.—I am much mistaken if you have not seen better days ;—poverty puts it out of my power to assist you with any thing but advice, but even that may perhaps be of some service to you, as I have some little experience of the world.

I sat down silent by his side, and after staring a little at each other,—It is the first time, said I, that I ever begged in my life ; but I must now beg to lodge with you here all night.—I will not grant your request, said he, but we will go together to a little cottage hard by. Since you passed I have luckily received a shilling from an old colonel, under

whom I served in Germany ; it will procure us all that is necessary to nature, and we will enjoy all that it can procure.

So saying, he laid his hand upon my shoulder, so we rose up, and jogged on towards the cot.—On our way I told him all that had happened to me.—He advised me to return to my friends, who would certainly do something for me : adding, that if I should throw myself friendless and unknown upon the world, the world would use me in a cold and friendless manner.—I will never return to them, said I ; they are the people I want most to avoid ; as they have long been tired with admonishing me in vain, a consciousness of my guilt would put it out of my power to appear before them.—I had just finished this sentence when we arrived

arrived at a little straw-built hut, into which we entered, and a simple repast was soon prepared for us. I sat down to the homely morsel with much more relish than ever I had done to the most luxurious feast, and ate with a much better appetite.

When we had finished our meal, and, as I expected, our money likewise, my messmate, looking cheerily over the table, told me, that the one half of our stock only was spent, and that with the other we might have a couple of bottles of strong beer.—Though this was a liquor I had never been accustomed to spend my evenings with, I agreed to the motion.—It was brought,—and was good.

Hearts naturally inclined to be merry, need very little stimulus ; ours were easily

warmed, and we soon forgot that each of us was to shift for the necessaries of life the next morning.

After we had spent the evening together, commenting upon and laughing at the caprice of fortune, it was resolved upon, that I should go in the morning and enlist with an officer, who then had a recruiting party in the town.—You will find, said the old man, more real happiness in the army, than among any other set of men that I am acquainted with; they will be perfectly adapted to your careless indifference of temper.

A ~~month~~ or two before this, I would have laughed at any one who would have told me that it was possible for me to live upon sixpence a day.—From this night's experience it not only became perfectly in-

intelligible to me that I could do so, but I was also perfectly reconciled to it ;—so I arose early in the morning, went and received the bounty-money,—returned to the cottage, and without the knowledge of my companion, put the whole of it into his pocket.

It is a pity, said I to myself while I did it ; it is a pity that so benevolent a heart should ever want ; it is a pity so reverend a head should stand uncovered, to implore a scanty subsistence from arrogant affluence. This will save him from exposing himself during the rigour of the winter months, while I shall have enough from day to day to supply me with all that nature stands in need of.—We parted, —and the sympathetic tear started into both our eyes.—Would I had my for-

tune again, said I, for thy sake I would be more careful of it ; the bleak winds should never whistle in thy hoary locks, while I had a roof to shelter thee under.

I have dwelt perhaps too long upon these incidents ; to you they may seem trifling, to me they appear very interesting ; and the impression they have left to this day upon my mind, will, I hope, plead my excuse for having related them so circumstantially.

Should I proceed any farther, I would be led into a narrative of the history of my life, most of the particulars of which you are already well acquainted with.— The far greater part of them have been very unfortunate, and on that account those who know me have always been astonished that I have supported myself under

under them, not only with firmness and resolution, but also with gaiety and cheerfulness of temper.—They have often asked me by what rules I did so; but I have no rule for this conduct, and I assume no merit in practising it.

Nature made me cheerful, and nothing will ever be able to destroy her work.—He left me, but his words remained fixed in my heart.

It is a very difficult task to judge of what passes within the human heart from the exterior appearance of the man; but if there is any degree of credit to be given to the countenance, I may venture to affirm, that I have seen people who enjoyed a considerable share of happiness in all the different conditions of life; but from all the observations I have hitherto

made, it would seem, that among the lowest class there are the greatest numbers cheerful, disinterested, and easy.

I shall not pretend to investigate the causes which render more of the poor people seemingly happy than of the rich.

—Man may make himself unhappy, but heaven only can give him the faculty of being pleased with himself, and the general distribution of things.

Rufus is of so gloomy a turn of mind, that though Providence has given him more than is necessary to life, yet he is perpetually quarrelling with the government of the world, and mending the works of nature. He never had any real misfortunes: but he suffers perpetually under the dismal apprehension of a possibility that they may some time attack

him.—

him.—He never compares his situation with that of these people who have fewer of the comforts of this world than himself ; but always with that of those who are elevated above him. He is very acute in discovering all the contingent evils that may possibly happen in the course of any undertaking ; but slow in apprehending any of the advantages that naturally result from it ; he is therefore timid, suspicious, and envious, and has suffered much more from the mere apprehension of evil, than perhaps he would have done, had it really attacked him.

Hillarius is of a widely different temper ; he only views the bright side of objects, and never torments himself with apprehending what he does not feel.

When

When he undertakes any thing, he calculates all the advantages that a lively imagination can figure to arise from it, and gives its disadvantages to the winds. He never compares his condition with that of those who are above him, but with that of those who are in the meanest circumstances, and hence he consoles himself that matters are no worse.

This method of comparison, instead of giving him a disgust at life, and the distribution of its enjoyments, gives him a secret satisfaction, and enhances the value of every thing he possesses ; for, says he, I consider mankind as so many dies jumbled together in a box, and am always glad to find that my lot has never yet been to lie at the bottom.

Rufus

Rufus may justly be reckoned too melancholy, and blamed for anticipating his misfortunes ;—and there are who may reckon Hillarius too secure, in not endeavouring to provide against them.— Both may perhaps be worthy of censure ; but was I to choose tempers, I should not hesitate a single moment to prefer that of Hillarius, as I think the man who smooths the rugged path of life, by a continual contemplation of the lucid side of the objects that present in it, has infinitely the advantage of him, who renders it still more rugged and untractable, by constantly representing to himself all their opposite sides, which appear pregnant with dark storms, and impending dangers.

C H A P. III.

The son of Adam, and of Eve,
Let Bourbon or Nassau go higher.

I Have already wrote two chapters, said I, without acquainting the reader any thing further concerning me, than that I am — Peter Pennyless.

But as no book can be much esteemed in this present age, unless the author be descended from some ancient family, famous for something, no matter whether for having hunted down so many stags and foxes, guzzled down so many butts of October, or snored in the presidents chair at so many meetings of country justices, I have now undertaken to lay before the world a short sketch of the history

history of my family,—to give every body an opportunity of knowing that I am—somebody.

The family of Pennyless, from which I have the honour to be descended, though the most ancient of all others, is not more illustrious for its antiquity, than remarkable for its singularity of behaviour ;—it has always been distinguished from other families by a more numerous race, and the characteristic of the greatest part of that race has always been, that they were either good, harmless, unthinking sort of people, who never troubled their heads about any thing ; or wrong-headed ones, who fixed upon principles without examining them, and maintained every thing they had fixed upon, merely because they had fixed upon it.

The

The power which our family has had in various nations and states, has often been very great, and almost unlimited; and at once sets us in a very exalted point of view; that we have been very powerful, I could easily prove from a variety of facts, but shall confine myself to a few.

Among that truly glorious people, the ancient Greeks, the legislative power and government of all the different republicks was vested in our family, and these republicks flourished under our auspices, though we did not think it incumbent upon us to manage them, as other people would have done;—we did not follow that stale and obsolete rule of rewarding every one who did us any service,—we went quite another way to work,

work, and when any one of our great men saved the state from ruin, we generally ruined his estate,—sent him into banishment, or took off his head, in return for the favour he had done us ; and notwithstanding this every one was fond of serving us.

Among that illustrious and victorious people the Romans, our family was neither less numerous, nor less powerful ; —we were there distinguished from other families by the name of plebs, i. e. people, and had representatives in the senate, called tribunes, who were by much the most powerful sparks in the whole city, insomuch that they could not only check the consular power, but also by pronouncing the word Veto, stop any proceeding of the senate from passing into a law,

law, if they thought it would be repugnant to the interest of the family.

I might here proceed to shew how plentifully we have been disseminated in every nation and state, and how many of them we have been masters of. As of Egypt, when we went by the name of Mamelukes ; and of the greatest part of Europe, when we over-ran it during the time that we were called Goths and Vandals.—I might also mention in what places we have held the chief power, although it seemed to be in the hands of others, as at Rome, where we often created our own emperors, while we passed under the name of legions, cohorts, bands, &c. and at Constantinople, where we do the same to this day, under
the

the name of janizaries ;—but these things shall pass over at present.

No person, so far as I know, has ever before me undertaken to set the importance of our family in its proper light ; the world has taken the advantage of our taciturnity, and arrogated to themselves the honour of every thing great and glorious that we have done.

Every great city which exists, is said to have been built by such an emperor or king ;—but it is false, for the ancestors of the family of Pennyless have laid every stone of it, and to them only belongs the honour of what has erroneously been ascribed to others.

Has a battle been won,—a country been delivered from its enemies,—such a king or general is said to have done it ;

E than

than which there can be nothing more absurd.—Is it in the power of a single arm to vanquish many thousands, or have kings always engaged in the actions they are said to have gained;—nay, they have commonly stood mere spectators, while the ancestors of the family of Pennyless have performed the task.

I might tire even the patience of a German by instances of this kind; but shall only mention in general, that whatever has been done great, arduous, or useful, has been the work of our family, which has time immemorial exerted itself, in supplying the wants, and providing for the necessities of the rest of mankind, while their own have been very much neglected.

These

These things will shew the intelligent reader of what consequence we have been, and still are, over all the world. I shall therefore leave off our general history, to take notice of some of our most illustrious actions, and of our consequence in this country.

We are at this present time (and more especially since the late dearth of provisions) not less numerous, nor less powerful in Britain, than we have formerly been, and still are, in many other nations.—We are here known and distinguished by the names of vulgar, rabble, mob, and a variety of other appellations too tedious to mention.

In this, as in all other countries, we have always been most steadily attached to the interests of each other; and when

ever any of our family has had his knuckles rapped, or his corny toes trod upon by one of another family,—the whole of us have in a moment been in an uproar.—I might give many ancient and modern instances of this, but at present shall content myself with one of each kind, being resolved in some future period of my life, to write a more particular history of our whole transactions; which, when finished, will compose one of the most voluminous and interesting works that ever was published.

The ancient instance which I shall relate, is that of my daring and illustrious great great grandfather, Wat Tyler, alias Pennyless, who, because some rude fellow not belonging to us, had the impudence to struggle for a kiss of a romping

ing

ing giddy-headed girl, his daughter, assembled together the whole of our family who were within hue and cry of him, in order to revenge the injury, who with incredible prowess were proceeding to turn out all the other families, and step into their places, when some dastardly sycophant stabbed poor Wat in the posteriors, and put an end to the bustle.

But now to descend to a latter period, and to mention some of our actions which will be handed down in the annals of fame to the latest posterity;—that we might shew that our souls were too great to be bound by these laws and obligations which are observed by other families,—we assembled together gloriously tumultuous, and with an uncontrollable licentiousness, elected for our

representative in the legislative body,—one of our number, who had fled from the tyranny and oppression of these laws, and of the families who executed them.

When, in consequence of this, endeavours were made to obstruct our sovereign will,—we did not with barbarous rage revenge ourselves by shedding the blood of our opponents,—nay, though enraged, we deliberated maturely before we fixed upon the objects of our resentment, and after much altercation, (as our assemblies are none of the most silent kind) it was resolved that they should all be of a fragile and non-resistant nature.

In pursuance of this resolution, we began our attack upon panes of glass and the windows of many a lofty palace
and

and humble cot, fell a sacrifice to the first efforts of our mighty prowess.— When we found ourselves a match for these,—emboldened with success, we ventured even to attack bacon hams, Cheshire cheeses, surloins of roast beef, and butts of porter;—glorious deeds;— and to let the town see that they were so, we ordered every house to be illuminated;— souls less magnanimous than ours, in performing these deeds, would have trembled at the light,—we rejoiced at it.

Long had we triumphed over every obstacle, and were become perfect arbiters of the fate of the city, and in hopes of obtaining the same power over the nation,—when an ill-natured fellow of a state physician, in order to communicate to our spirits the same saturnine dullness

which he felt in his own, prescribed for us some doses of leaden pills. How hurtful this mineral is to life, when drunk in cyder, appears from an essay published by a member of the college of physicians,—but by your leave, doctor, there is yet a much more fatal way of administering it,—and to us it was administered in this manner,—some of us sickened,—others died of the experiment,—the survivors felt a lethargic torpor creep over their whole constitution, from which many of them are not as yet recovered.

As I am now drawing toward an end of what I intend to say at this time, and would willingly crowd together as much of our history into as few words as possible,—I shall observe that we have had

the

the honour of making every emperor, king, and potentate that has ever existed in any period of time : and in England, it is well known that we have always had the power of choosing these truly great men, lord mayors and aldermen,—as also that of electing the no less illustrious members of the British senate, whom we have constantly obliged to pay us very handsomely when we conferred that honour upon them.

No family has ever shewn such a noble disinterestedness as ours ; for it has always gained every penny that the rich and great are possessed of, and yet has never availed itself of any advantages it might have had on these occasions ;— nay, it has not only had the honour of gaining their daily bread, and preserving

their

existence, but has also frequently been the means of calling them forth into that existence.

Let no person, therefore, think meanly of us, or at least let every one who is not satisfied with what of our illustrious actions I have now set forth, suspend his judgement, till I shall have time to write a more circumstantial account of our history.

C H A P,

C H A P. IV.

Trahit quemque sua voluptas.

I intend to take you a jaunt into the country, said my aunt Margery Littlestock:—Now my aunt is a whimsical sort of old woman, and originally descended from the family of Pennyless; but having risen a degree above it, she sometimes in her freakish fits denies that she has any connection with it, and is at other times extremely kind to me as a branch of it.

About ten years ago she buried an indulgent husband, whom she was very fond of.—Now the nature of a woman is such, that her passion for a husband must necessarily devolve upon some other object, when

when that husband is no more;—my aunt's had devolved upon cards.

She has a brother, who is a worthy old clergyman down in Kent, to whom she pays an annual visit, along with her only child Sophy Littlestock, of whom she was delivered a few months after her husband's death; and when she is disposed to do me and our family an honour, she takes me in the chaise along with her.

As the old clergyman is more devoted to the duties of his function than any thing else, he has but little time, and perhaps less inclination for diversions, and therefore it is as difficult to find a clean pack of cards in his house, as to meet real indigence going cursing him from the door of it. For this reason my aunt carries down a few packs with her

her every annual visit, when the good old man and his wife are kind enough to spend an hour with her at her favourite diversion every evening, as they know it would otherwise be impossible to keep her in humour.

When we were all preparing at my aunt's to set out on our journey, the driver brought the chaise a little before she was ready ;—what great evils often arise from small beginnings.—

She was by this put into a confusion ;—three packs of cards, and her prayer book, were carefully put into a black leather case, and laid upon the table ;—we all tripped down stairs in a hurry,—got into the chaise, and were drove away ;—the black leather case, with the cards and

and prayer book in it, was left upon the table.

Just a little before we came to Dartford, the driver pulled his glove from his right hand,—put his whip below his left arm,—and having thus adjusted matters, was taking a comfortable draught of Holland's gin, from a leathern bottle which he carried in his pocket —The horses, who it seems were sensible that he could not use his whip while it was below his arm, nor his spurs while the enchanting draught occupied every sense, were going at a slow pace, when an old man, who bore upon his body many marks of violence, making use of this opportunity, crawled toward the chaise, and asked for a halfpenny.

His looks pleaded more powerfully than his tongue, so I was predetermined to give him something; but as he appeared to have suffered in some very extraordinary manner, I desired the driver to stop, and him to give us an account of his misfortunes.

My story, said he, is a short, but affecting one: I was pressed on board of one of his majesty's ships toward the latter end of the war.—At the Havannah I received these wounds, which have hardly left to me the human shape, and likewise took the fever of the country; which I believe I should have recovered from, and was beginning to do so, when provisions arose to such an enormous height, that all the money I could get was insufficient to procure me half the

ne-

necessaries of life ;—in consequence of this, I lost the use of my limbs.—Here my aunt put her hand into her pocket.

The old man's eyes sparkled.—

A minute or two was elapsed ;—her hand was not like to come out ;—so his eyes lost their lustre, and the same languor spread itself again over his countenance.

Mama, said little Sophy, I think the poor man looks very hungry.—I was hungry last week, when you staid out late at cards, and had all the keys with you. I assure you hunger is very ill to bear.—Do, mama, give him a slice of the cold tongue you brought along with you.—The old man bowed.—As I never was very fond of tongues, I seconded the motion.—The old man bowed again.

my aunt kept fumbling in her pocket ;
—the old man resumed his story.

I was at last brought to England, said he, the ship was paid off, and I received upwards of one hundred and fifty pounds.—(here my aunt began to feel in her other pocket) which I was advised to put into the hands of a London merchant, who broke a few months afterwards, and reduced me to the necessity of living upon that charity which my wretched fate has almost deprived me of the power of seeking.—Here my aunt laid her head backward, and with a pale face turned toward heaven, and upcast eyes, shrieked —Was there ever such an unfortunate creature !—Very unfortunate indeed, ma— said I.—She then half opened her eyes, and heaving a broken sigh, uttered,

in a sound hardly intelligible,—the cards,—the cards,—they have indeed played very ill for him, said I.—

My aunt could contain her passion no longer,—she raised her head in a moment, and sitting upright, cried out in a surly tone, I tell you, Peter, I have forgot the cards, and am myself the most wretched creature in the world, as we will not get a single pack in the country ; —but—but—I am resolved to drive back to town for them.

Mama, said Sophy, have you not forgot the prayer-book along with them ? What shall we do for a prayer-book !—As for that, my dear, answered she, you know we can easily get one from your uncle.

There

There are plenty of cards to be got as we pass through Rochester, said the driver.—My aunt's countenance was softened.—I asserted the same thing, though I knew nothing of the matter.—She began to look pleased.

Writers on human nature have agreed, that the most proper time to obtain any thing of a woman, is when she has just emerged from some grief or disappointment.—I snatched this opportunity to intercede with my aunt in behalf of the poor man.—She would not hear me.—You writers on nature have misled me, said I.

Sophy and me joined a few halfpennies, and gave him.—Drive away, said my aunt; I am very glad that they are to be got there.

After we had passed through Dartford, just as we were turning the corner of an hedge, my aunt looked full in my face :— And are you sure, Peter, said she, that we, can get cards at Rochester ? If we do not I shall certainly return to town for them ; not that I am very fond of cards neither, but you know, Peter, that a woman accustomed to the polite company of London cannot possibly drawl away her evenings with a country parson and his wife, without something to divert her. Here my aunt leaned her head backward, and seemed in as much agitation of mind, as if the gaining or losing an empire had depended upon finding cards at Rochester.

Sophy and me diverted ourselves by viewing the beauties of the fields and gentlemens seats as we passed them.—

One

One more elegant than the rest I pointed out to my aunt.—The owner, said she, is certainly a man of taste, and I will lay you any bet that he is fond of cards.

When we stopped at the inn, let us get out, said Sophy.—You shall not stir, said my aunt, nor shall the horses be unyoked, till I know whether I can get the cards.—So the driver was dispatched in quest of them.

Mama, said Sophy, pray let me have a glass of wine and a biscuit; since I must not get out, it will be necessary for us all, if we shall be obliged to return.—My aunt flirted her fan.—You mind nothing but your stomach, girl, said she; for my part, I am sure I can neither eat nor drink; and I dare say, Peter, you

are in the same situation, laying her hand upon my shoulder.—I was silent.

At this instant the driver returned with three packs of cards in his hand.—My aunt's countenance brightened immediately.—Come, my dear, said she to Sophy, let us step into the house, and get something to eat ; for I am very hungry, and I dare say my child is so too.—Mama, said Sophy, have you got a prayer-book along with these cards ?—No, answered my aunt.—You had better send and get one ; I suppose they have prayer-books in this place, as well as cards.—You know, my dear, I told you already that I could get one from your uncle, and if he should not have a spare one, I can easily get my own by the carrier next week.

The

The most depraved of the human species are never totally lost to all the softer feelings ; but among the avenues that lead to the heart, there are some ever impenetrably blocked up, and others again always open to admit them.—This was exactly the case with my aunt. She was far from having a hard and uncharitable temper ; but then her charity was wholly confined to such objects as had fallen under these particular misfortunes, that had a power of awaking her softer sensations.

In the days of her youth and beauty she had been courted by a smart linen-draper, who married another woman on the day preceding that on which he should have married her—There is nothing capable of giving us so sensible a feeling for

the miseries of others, as to have been in the same situation ourselves.—My aunt, ever after this, most heartily sympathized with every one who had been unfortunate in love ; and as that which I just now mentioned was the greatest misfortune she had ever felt herself, so she looked upon these of a similar nature to be the greatest that could possibly befall any of the human race, and therefore her whole stock of pity and charity was exhausted upon objects of this nature, and her heart totally inaccessible by any other method.

After dinner my aunt wrapped her three packs of cards in her handkerchief, and tied the corners of it with three knots.—I will trust you no more upon the table, says she, addressing herself to the cards,—

cards,—so she put them into her pocket.

We resumed our journey;—adventures seemed to crowd upon us; for we had scarce been jolted together a quarter of an hour, when a lusty young hussy in rags stepped up to us, and putting on a melancholy face, begged that we would give her some charity, to help her to subsist on her way home.

I knew my aunt would now be duped.

Push on, said I to the driver.—Stop, cried my aunt, stop;—so he pulled in the horses.—My aunt desired the wench to inform us how so young a creature came to be reduced to begging.

I was born, said she, and brought up in London, where a young journeyman bricklayer courted me, and obtained my consent

consent to marry him.—I am sure I suspected no harm, not I; but before the time arrived that we should have been married, he flattered me so much, that—Hold your tongue, said my aunt, you impudent flatter, if you had not been as bad as himself, his flattery would never have prevailed so far upon your virtue, that—Dear madam, said the wench, you won't let me speak. I was going to tell you, how he flattered me so much, that he got possession of all the little money that I had earned with the sweat of my brow, —and then the perfidious wretch abandoned me—for ever.—Indeed I would never have suspected it ;—indeed I would not.

My aunt put her hand into her pocket.

Mama, said Sophy, I hope the cards

are

are safe, are they? — Tush, hard-hearted girl, replied she, do you think I can mind cards just now, when a picture of such distress is exhibited before me? — no, my dear, — my heart is of a softer kind; — and the world knows that I always take care to stifle every other thought but that of pity, when the wretched apply to me for relief. — Here, poor girl, — take this half crown, — is there a heart existing that could pass by so much misery, without at least pitying, or endeavouring to alleviate it.

While she said this, she stared in my face; — the meaning of it was plain; — then turning to Sophy, — have you got any halfpennies, said she, do, give the poor thing a few; — the wench curtseyed to Sophy. I have none left, mama, answered

swered she, I gave them all to the poor man at Dartford ;—the wench looked to my aunt ;—have you got any, Peter? said my aunt ;—the wench curtseyed to me ;—not a sou, madam, said I, they all went along with Sophy's.

Ah, Sophy, said my aunt, turning a stern countenance toward her, how ill do you choose the objects of your charity, —do, my child, be directed by me for the future, (her countenance softened as she said this) all the town knows that I place my charity as properly as any one living.

It is a laudable conduct, said I, and a fellow-feeling for every one of our species in distress is the most godlike virtue, especially when this feeling is directed by a discerning judgment, and effuses itself upon

upon deserving objects ; but I am afraid yours sometimes mistakes them, at least I cannot help wondering why so tender and compassionate a temper did not give something to the poor old man who accosted us at Dartford, especially when I consider that his misfortunes were much greater than these of this wench, who is still capable to earn a livelihood with her hands, whereas he was totally disabled,—and disabled in the service of his country ;—and let his country take care of him then, said she ;—and so flirting her fan, laid her head back upon the chaise.

You, said I, madam, are a part of that country, and consequently ought to exert a part of that care incumbent upon you,—drive away, cried my aunt in an angry tone,—drive away.

C H A P.

C H A P. V.

Tutus in exiguo gramine dormit inops.

THE family of Pennyless, said I, as I sat shivering in my hovel, has never been remarkably attached to any particular place, as they never possessed any property worthy of such attachment;—they have therefore wandered over all the world,—many of them to defend the property of other people, and many of them to acquire some property of other people, and many of them to acquire some property of their own.

No branch of the family has ever been less attached to a particular spot than myself;—no branch of it has ever had less property, or less inclination to attach him;

him ;—but as I never found myself in a humour to let my body as a mark to be shot at, in defence of what I had no prospect of being benefited by ;—nor ever wished to relinquish that family which gave me birth, nourished me in rural innocence,—and taught me, though not the rules of wisdom, yet those of sincerity and truth.—I have therefore never been inclined to travel as a hireling,—I have therefore never been inclined to travel through avarice,—but I have often been inclined to travel as a man,—that is, I have walked over several countries to view the works of nature and of art.

As I have been always passionately fond of endeavouring to read human faces, in all my excursions I have associated

ciated myself with a crowd, wherever I could find it gathered together.—This humour led me not long ago to a presbyterian conventicle, assembled together in the field for the dispensing of the sacrament.

There was in that part of the country an old man, known by the name of mad Tom, who through tattered garments, and ornaments of straw, discovered a mien and gesture which had been accustomed to better days.—He was a frequent attender of these meetings, and sometimes, after the sermons were over, concluded the day with a short speech to the audience. That which he made to my hearing, I shall relate without an apology.

Mad Tom's speech to the presbyterian
congregation.

My dear friends, after so many loud and long discourses, I should not now presume to detain you, were I not persuaded that your passions have only been played upon all day with sound, and your judgments not informed by sense,

It is an old proverb in the country where I was born, that a fool may give a wise man a good council. If there be any truth in this observation, no body can have a better right to give advice than me;—and if I happen to advise any thing worthy of your attention, I hope you will be wise enough not to despise it, because it comes from a fool.

The first advice I shall offer you, is to guard against a weakness, to which in this part of the country you seem very much addicted ;—I mean that of crowding together in great multitudes to every field conventicle.—I see you staring at me from every corner, and some of you too with horror in your faces, at what you reckon so impious a speech,—but I beg that you will soften your features, and compose your minds till you hear the reasons for what I have advanced.

The first is, because the greatest part, if not all of the discourses I have heard at these meetings, have been calculated more to inflame your passions, than to instruct your hearts ; and I challenge any of you to tell me, what duty to God or man he has been informed of since he came

came here this morning?—I observed you always gaping with the greatest attention to these of your preachers, who had the longest twang, and the most melancholy countenance,—but believe me, my friends, virtue does not consist in a certain tone of voice, nor in an external appearance.

My second reason is, because you may be as well instructed at your own parish churches ; and I may add, that the service there is generally performed with more decency and good order, than in such numerous meetings, where the attention is disturbed with noise, and diverted with novelty.

And my third is, because many of you by attending here, neglect or incapacitate yourselves for performing the real duties

of life.—On looking around,—I can see many who have walked ten or a dozen of miles this morning, and who, on arriving here, have slept the greatest part of the day on the grass, and perhaps on going home, will be so fatigued as to sleep the greatest part of the next in their beds.

But,

The religious worship we owe to our Maker, does not supersede the obligations we owe to ourselves, and these with whom we are connected, by nature and the laws of our country.

Rural habitations, such as these you possess, are generally the seats of more innocence,—and I may add, of more happiness, than we commonly meet with in crowded cities.—For this reason, I give

give it as my second advice, to endeavour to be contented with your situation, where your honest industry can make you more independant than the fawning courtier,—and your exercise and simplicity of life, more healthful than the pampered citizen.

Though you possess little, you have all that is necessary to nature,—and the rest is superfluous.

There are many advantages attending poverty that you are not aware of :—you live unenvied, and in safety,—nor are you racked with a fear of being degraded from your present dignity ;—your houses, in which there is nothing tempting, need not be barrocaded against the nightly invader of life and property ;—and a greater advantage still, than any of these

I have mentioned, is your having fewer temptations to vice and immorality.

Be not ye therefore captivated with the false glittering of a splendid appearance,—it is an ignis fatuus, which will lead you into a thousand dangers; for you may believe me, that the person whom you think fits at ease and is happy, because he has loaded six horses to drag him along, is generally himself loaded with the more galling chains of corrosive care,—and a splendid garment often covers a melancholy mind.

As my third advice, I beg of you not to be too fond of knowledge.—In your humble sphere much of it is useless, nay, hurtful; for the more you acquire of it, you will become the less fit for your several employments, and it will set loose upon

upon your minds a numberless swarm of tormentors, which at present you have no ideas of ; and you will find that Solomon never said a wiser thing than when he observed, that he who increaseth knowledge, increaseth — sorrow.

The only knowledge that is requisite for people of your station, is to know your duty to God and man, and to be expert in your several occupations,— that you may be instructed in the former, — read the Scriptures,—but read no comments upon them,—you are unacquainted with the subtilties of sophistical reasoning, by different religions and sects,— with the arts of wresting and perverting the sacred writings; to make them serve every particular purpose ; and therefore if commentators do not lead you astray,

they

they will at least infallibly bewilder and perplex your minds.

You have been told this day, in my hearing, that the Scriptures were given you as a rule of your faith and manners ; — and at the same time that they are so dark and mysterious, that you cannot understand them, unless they be explained to you by preaching.—I have no inclination to quarrel with the clergy ;— though, on this occasion, I cannot help telling you, that whatever is in the Scripture above the comprehension of a common capacity, is unnecessary to be known ;— and I will add, that had the Author of nature given a law to man, and required him to observe it, without bestowing on him a power of understanding it, he would have acted inconsistently with

with that eternal rectitude, of which he is the author *.

The fourth advice which I shall give, is to make yourselves acquainted as well as possible with your different employments and trades.—They will make you independant of fortune, as they are useful in every part of the world, the wants and necessities of man being the same every where ;—they will every where gain you a subsistence ;—but above all things, I would recommend to you the study of agriculture, which is the chief support of human life, and therefore the most honourable and useful of all other

* C'est une absurdité, c'est un outrage au genre humain, c'est attentat contre l'etre infini & supreme de dire, il y a une vérité essentielle à l'homme, & Dieu l'a cachée.

employments ;—for I cannot help thinking, that he who cultivates an acre of ground is of more real service to his species, than all the philosophers who ever existed.

You are happy in your present situation, if you know how to enjoy it ; and should you change it indeliberately for any other which you may think more advantageous, I dare venture to affirm, that even the condition which you most admire, was it in your power to reach it, would yield you much less satisfaction than it promised, and perhaps less peace of mind than that in which you are at present.

Guard therefore against ambition ;—it will place every thing before you in a false light ;—it will magnify the advantages

tages of every other situation;—it will diminish these of your own.—

I could go on to give you many more advices;—but you are already tired with discourses; suffer me then only to add, that if you practise these I have already given, they will be almost sufficient;—they will make your rural retirements happy while you live,—and you will only change them at death, to enter into others which will be still more so.

C H A P. VI.

Furca naturam expelles.

SENECA has always been one of my favourite authors.—Now I had just finished reading his consolatory chapter against immoderate sorrow for the loss of friends, when a servant came to desire me to step in to my neighbour Beverley's.

So I closed the book, and, as I did it, laying my right hand across my breast, thou, Seneca, said I, hast steeled me at all points; not only against the loss of relations, but against every other misfortune that can possibly happen.—I could now stand with the greatest indifference, and see world wrecked against world,—

and

and myself at last involved in the general ruin.

I had just finished this sentence when I was got as far as my neighbour's door, and by saying it, methought my heart was become too large to be contained within my breast.

In this humour I stepped in, and found that his wife had a few minutes before expired in his arms, while three lovely children were weeping around their deceased mother.—The good man sat leaning his head upon his arm, and wiping a silent tear from his eye, which he endeavoured to conceal from his little family.

I have a remedy for your distress, said I to myself, so putting on the air of a stoic, I sat down.

Have

Have you ever read Seneca, said I?—
No, answered he.—My heart exulted
within me at the reply; so I began from
that author to tell him, that it was need-
less to grieve for death, since it was un-
avoidable;—that the manner how, was
uncertain and indifferent;—that the time
when, was of no consequence,—as the
longest liver only survived the shortest
for a few days;—that tears might be a
means of carrying us to the dead, but
could never bring them back to us.—
This will certainly do, said I; so I
stopped to observe the effect of it.—A
fresh tear fell from his eye.—I have yet
stronger consolations than these, thought
I, and they will certainly answer.

So I went on to observe, that death
only took the deceased from a world of

pain,

pain, anxiety, and trouble, to one of peace and serenity ; and that the spirits of the departed looked down with contempt upon our ignorance, for grieving foolishly at their welfare. Here the tears began to flow more abundantly.—I was astonished !—

There is nothing more easily given, nor more difficultly received than consolation and advice. When the mind is at ease, she thinks that the considerations she offers would restore her own quiet, if it was lost, and therefore naturally concludes that they should restore that of another.—When she is established in the principles of virtue, she wonders how any one can be vicious.—I thought that what I had said would have recovered me from the most affecting scene of woe, and

and I thought it should have done so to my neighbour, so I never imagined that what Seneca had said might be unnatural, but that my neighbour was insensible.

I will profit by these consolatory discourses, said I, if no body else should; so I went home, and read them all over again; as also his dissertation on anger.— Strange! said I, when I had finished them, what a man my neighbour is!— Grief, sorrow, anger, now all appear to me in such a ridiculous light, that I think I shall never be weak enough to fall into any of them.— Thanks to Seneca.— Would he could put my good neighbour in the same situation; and he certainly would do it, if the poor man was capable of perceiving the force of his reasoning.

There

There is nothing so apt to deceive us as our own hearts.—The servant was laying the cloth for supper ;—I was walking through the room in this elevated temper ;—Let the world go to wreck, said I, what is that to me ? Just as I was saying it, a darling China mug, which was a gift from my aunt Margery, fell plump on the floor, and was shivered to pieces.—Devil—cried I, and lifting up my stick, lent the poor fellow a blow upon the head,—He ran out of the room in a fright,—and I ran about it in a passion.

There was hardly any thing that I valued more than my mug, except Seneca's book, and it had unluckily been swept from the corner of the table by the

H tail

tail of the servant's coat, and lay among the shattered fragments of the mug, and among the spilt beer whtch it had contained.—When I observed this, I grew outrageous,—pulled up the book,—threw it into the fire,—pulled it out again,—threw it on the floor,—stamped on it with my foot,—then flung myself into the great chair.—

As I had nothing to vent my rage upon, it began to subside ;—so I arose, and opened the book, to see if it was spoiled.—At first sight, several exclamations against anger presented to me.—I was struck !—I will behave better for the future, said I ; and nothing, O divine old man ! shall ever make me again deviate from thy rules !

There

There is nothing easier than to make resolutions, and nothing more difficult than to keep them.

I sat down again, laid Epictetus and Seneca on the table before me, and turned my reading particularly on the contempt of bodily pain, which by their help I clearly discovered to have nothing to do with the mind, and was therefore firmly resolved that I would disregard them, if ever any of them should attack me;— so I counted upon my resolutions as acquisitions already made, and considering myself as above the rest of mankind.— It is an easy thing, said I, to curb every unruly passion;— I am surprised that every body does not do it.

In this humour I went to bed, perfectly superior to every contingency;—

but having been frequently subject to the tooth-ach, I awaked in the night in a violent fit of it.—I rung the bell,—waked the whole house,—called for all my antidotes,—none of them relieved me.—Disappointment doubles the weight of any misfortune, and frets the mind; so I knocked my head against the bed-post, and committed a thousand other extravagances; and at last jumping out on the floor, I beheld Seneca and Epectetus lying on the table.—You are liars, cried I, so I lifted them, and dashed them on the floor. You are liars,—for I find pain affects the body, and the soul, and the—I will trust to you no more; so I sent for a surgeon, and had my tooth drawn.

The pain was soon over, and I returned to bed.—Sweet ease, said I, as I laid me down, how soft thou makest the pillow upon which we lay our heads!—so I went to sleep.—In the morning, when I got up, the servant had again laid the two books upon the table. When there is nothing to disturb the mind,—she often wonders how any thing ever could disturb her.—I took up Seneca again, and soon read myself into a thorough contempt both of my former conduct, and of all the cross accidents of life.

The two last accidents, said I, came plump upon me, without allowing me any time to fortify myself;—so they overcame by a coup de main;—but let adversity come upon me by degrees, let it warn me of its approach, and then

let it try if it can vanquish my resolution.

I had now an only brother ; in his tender infancy he had been committed to my care, and I had nourished him in my bosom, and been to him as a father ; he had repaid me with love and duty ; they were all he had to give.—He was at this time complaining, and his complaints soon discovered that he was afflicted with a nervous fever.—So long as the physician had any hope of his recovery, I stood firmly collected within myself—Whatever shall happen to him, said I,—I will behave like a philosopher.

As soon as I was told by the doctor that his disease would be fatal,—my firmness began to be relaxed, and my resolution to fail.—I hung in suspense whether

whether I shold incline to Seneca or to nature. When he drew his last breath, he seemed to fix his eyes upon me.—The look pierced my heart ;—I shall remember it while I live.—Seneca was discarded, nature took possession of my whole soul, and the congenial tear rushed into my eye.

I wiped it away, and while I did it,—I will still be a philospher, said I ; so I took up Seneca once more, to search for consolation.—Circumstances were changed,—he afforded me none.—Thou hast deceived me, said I, with words ;—thou hast endeavoured to strip me of the feelings of nature and humanity ; but this (wiping a tear from my eye) informs me that thou hast laboured in vain.

My neighbour Beverly came in, and afforded me much the same consolation as I had done him, and with much the same effect.

After him came the vicar of our parish, who endeavoured to console me by every argument that could be drawn from Scripture, religion and reason.— The tear gushed faster from my eye while he spoke.

My relations too gathered about me, and fell upon every method they could invent to diminish my grief; but they were fighting against the principle within me.

I thought I had behaved well to my brother while alive; but now he was dead, I thought otherwise; and every ungracious word I had uttered to him crowded

crowded into my memory.—Great God! said I, could we think of this in time, how differently would we behave to each other !

The tender sensations are the most valuable parts of humanity, and whoever endeavours to detract them from the soul, endeavours to rob her of the most precious gift of heaven.—If we had no feeling for each other, society and every good office would be at an end ; but mine, said I, as I am now convinced of their utility, shall never end but with my existence.

C H A P. VII.

Non hospes ab hospite tutus.

THE social principle is one of the strongest of those that are implanted in the human mind ;—it is the source of some of the most refined and intellectual pleasures ;—and often affords an opportunity of displaying some of the most disinterested virtues.

This principle is not solely confined to man, but seems universally diffused thro' every species of beings, and exerts itself powerfully in the hearts of many of these whom we are apt to consider as void of any of the softer feelings.

But though this principle seems to instigate every creature to associate with those

those of its own species, yet man appears to be the only one who is endowed with powers suited to render this association extensively useful ;—he only can relate in public whatever has happened to him in private,—and thereby diffuse his happiness through the whole company, or make them share of, and help to alleviate his grief ;—he only is possessed of a power of reasoning upon, comparing together, and taking council concerning contingent circumstances,—and he only can communicate to all around him every idea that arises in his mind.

But this freedom of communication does not always take place ; for in all the common affairs of life, the man who is not independant of the world, is masked, and we only see the moving figure,

but

but not the man ; for his real sentiments are totally concealed, whenever they happen to interfere with his interest.— But this is not all ; he is not only obliged to conceal his own sentiments, but often also to chime in with those of others, though directly contrary to them ; and, Proteus like, to be changing every moment, that he may become all things to all men.

It is for this reason, that above all other things in the world, every man would wish to be independant, that neither his body nor his mind may be subject to the whim and caprice of others.

And it is for this reason also, that every one so much admires a meeting of select sensible friends, who, divested of the common prejudices of life, can freely

unbosom

unbosom themselves to each other ;—can dare to act without restraint,—and to speak from what they feel ;—here we may see naked nature,—here we may read the human heart.

As in mixed meetings men are generally timid, cautious, and distrustful, in order to render them something similar to those of friends, the generous glass was perhaps first instituted, and still retained.

Besides the power that this has of lulling every care asleep, and quieting every anxiety,—it opens and dilates the mind; and divests the man of that mask under which he commonly shrowds himself from the eyes of the world ;—grown cheerful, but not insensible, he disdains every thing that is little,—he disdains to conceal

conceal himself,—the real sentiments of his heart break forth, and forgetting his dependance, he appears what he really is.

The time which we spend in this manner is one of the happiest parts of our lives ; and thus far, O ye most rigidly virtuous, I have always thought I might indulge without a crime ; but when the company begin to grow tumultuous, as is too often the case,—when they begin to degenerate into futility of discourse, let the man withdraw who only came there to read the human heart,—he will find nothing afterward but an effusion of its filth and sorder ; and will be in danger of being sucked into the vortex of surrounding folly, from which, if ever he extricates himself, it will be with pain and difficulty.

It

It would seem that every age and country have, in some degree, been sensible of the advantages arising from the social principle, and to the love of cultivating it, we may attribute the first formation of mankind into families and societies ;—as also the mutual intercourse that subsists among these families, by means of visiting each other, than which nothing can be more laudable; did not the landlord often abuse his guests, with what is falsely looked upon as an exuberance of friendship.

Having suffered several times in this manner, I have of late been much more afraid to go into the house of one of my friends, than into that of one of my enemies, who hates me in his heart;—here the worst that can happen is to be coolly

coolly treated, and soon dismissed; in the other, it is ten to one but I am detained from necessary business, and at last entirely disabled from doing it.—If, however, I should escape, just with power and sensibility enough to get out of his house, I am sure not to have enough of either to carry me home to my own, but am in danger of tumbling into every kennel, knocking my head against every post, or becoming a prey to every pickpocket that may meet me on the way.

This over-acted hospitality of landlords, has of late prevailed so much, that people from a kind of custom have contracted a habit of thinking themselves as much at liberty to get drunk in the house of a friend as in a tavern.—

I have

I have of late been favoured with a sight of several letters upon this subject, some of which I am allowed to lay before the public.—The first is from a bachelor housholder.

Dear Jack,

You cannot imagine the numerous grievances that we poor bachelors labour under: my fortune, you know, is but very moderate, though my mind is so social, that I always love to have a few friends about me; and with these I have lived tolerably happy these dozen of years past; but of late, sir, the genius of my neighbours is so much changed, that I shall either be obliged to lay aside my social plan, and not admit a creature

I within

within my door, or immediately run out
my constitution and estate.

Formerly I used upon some particular occasions to make a few of my guests drunk,—but now almost upon every occasion they make themselves so at my expence.—I am often obliged to make my servant get out of the way, and then pretend that he has taken the key of the cellar along with him. But this seldom avails me any thing; for some one of the company is generally complaisant enough to go for a blacksmith to break open the door, or to do it himself, and then to surprize me at once, by setting a dozen or two of my best upon the table.

The price of this dozen which I intended to have saved, is not all the loss I sustain:—the company grow riotous, my

glasses,

glasses, tables, chairs, and other furniture, are broken and abused, and myself laid up in bed with a sick stomach and an aching head all the next day.

When I have any company to dine with me, they seldom go away till they have supped also. When they stay supper, I must sit up all night; if I give hints that they should go away, I am only a few hours and bottles the farther from my purpose. We cannot go away so, says one; nobody goes home sober from a bachelor's house, says another: —so every one takes upon him to be landlord;—calls for what he pleases, and gets drunk as fast as he can.—I have tried every method of stopping this licentious custom,—but in vain have I tried them all; shall therefore soon be reduced

to the necessity of shutting up my house against every visiter, or of being turned to the door of it, a beggar.

I am, sir, your abused friend,
Francis Freeheart.

The second letter complains of an evil not less destructive to society, in the following manner:

Dear Tom,

It is long since I have been distinguished by all the jolly fellows of my acquaintance, by the name of a weak head; that is, a head which cannot bear a great quantity of liquor. In this sense, though my head is weak, yet my heart is friendly to the rest of my species, and loves to mix in social pleasures along with

with them: but this I believe I shall soon be obliged to desist from, unless it be to associate myself with the softer sex over a dish of harmless tea, for at present a ridiculous custom prevails here, whereby every one is obliged to drink off his bumper as often as it goes round, without any regard to the different strength of heads, constitutions, &c. by which it happens, that I never can have the pleasure of making merry with my friends, without getting fuddled with them also.—Nor is this all that I complain of.—I never sooner appear in any company than they begin to push the bottle about as hard as they can, in order to take the advantage of my weakness, and see me expose myself; by which vicious inclination, I always become the

innocent instrument of making every one in the company drunk, as it generally happens, that by the time they have laid me up, (as they call it) they have also put themselves into a humour not to part, till they are in the same condition.

In our daily papers, and at the corner of every street, I can easily hear of a sovereign and never-failing remedy for every disease incident to mankind, but that of a weak head.—Now, sir, could these adepts, who have made such wonderful progress in every other branch of the healing art, could they, I say, discover any thing that would fortify and strengthen the pericranium, they would be intitled not only to the thanks of your humble

humble servant, but also to those of many
of his neighbours, whose heads are ——

I am, sir, yours,
Timothy Tindal.

The third is from a young clergyman,
who describes a case which I am afraid
is by much too common.

Reverend Sir,

You know I am now become a clergyman, and that I have always indulged a social disposition, as I never thought inconsistent with my sacred function, but since I have taken orders, I have been much embarrassed with a difficulty which I never so much as thought of; I no sooner appear in any company than the whisper goes round, let us make the

parson drunk; in consequence of this, every indirect method is immediately practised to mix brandy, rum, or some other spirituous liquor with my wine or punch: if I take notice of it I am laughed at; if I refuse to drink, I am called mōrose, ill-natured, or enthusiastic; if I get drunk, the story is handed through the whole town next day, and I am pointed at in the street as a disgrace to the sacred order to which I belong. Could your experience in life extricate me from this difficulty, you would confer the greatest of obligations upon,

Your very humble servant,

Clericus.

If a landlord should deliberately twist the nose, or break the head of a guest whom

whom he has invited to his house, would not the sufferer think himself very ill used, and feel that he had sustained an injury ;—but let him reflect, and he will find this injury still greater, if he is obliged to swallow as much liquor as will lay every weakness of his mind open to the company, and throw his body also into sickness and disorder.

Should I not have reason to complain of a man who asked me to his house, and ushered me into a company of madmen, among whom my life might be in danger ; and have I not much more reason to complain, when he introduces me into a company of sober people, and does every thing in his power to turn us all into fools, and madmen of a still more outrageous nature.

Though

several women of the town, and was knocking down every body I met when they laid hold of me.—I now began to rub my eyes, and to feel for my pocket book, which contained a twenty pound bank bill, but it was gone ; as also my watch, which cost me about thirty guineas.—In short, sir, this one dinner of Sir John's cost me near an hundred pounds, besides a magnificent rib roasting, a couple of black eyes, and a broken nose.

I was foolish enough to think that as Sir John had been the cause of my loss, he would refund it ; but when I went to him on that account, the rogue only laughed at me, and asked me to dine with him again.

Pray send me your advice whether you think I may venture to do it, and you will oblige yours,

Philip Foppling.

C H A P. VIII.

Audi alterum partem.

I Was spending the evening with my aunt Margery.—Have you heard any news to-day, Peter? said she, yawning as she said it.—Not a word, said I, stretching my jaws also.—My aunt looked at me,—I looked at my aunt; but none of us had a word to say;—so she took up a volume of Dean Swift, that was lying on the table, and having read a few pages, threw it down again, in a kind of passion.—I will read no more of it, said she;—the man has been totally overgrown with spleen.

I had a volume of Rousseau's Emilius in my pocket, so pulling it out,—If you please

please to amuse yourself a little with that, said I, you will find the author a contrast to the Dean.—She took it out of my hand, and having read a few pages, laid it down on the table ; then placing her elbow just by it, and leaning her head upon her hand,—This is a book just to my own mind, said she ; the author has been a lover of humanity.—Then looking in my face,—Among so many different opinions, what do you think of our species, Peter ? continued she.

The question startled me ! it would take a philosopher a great part of his life to answer it, thought I,—and yet I must endeavour to do it in the space of a few short minutes ;—so I began.

In considering human nature, madam, said I, by far the greatest part of mankind

kind have always run into two very opposite extremes;—one of these has been to represent it in the most horrid and forbidding light, as a compound of every vice, imperfection, and meanness; and the other, to display it as possessing every thing that is amiable and virtuous.

The celebrated Dean Swift, whom you have been just now reading, who was as remarkable for the overflowing of his gall, as of his wit, may deservedly be placed at the head of the vilifiers of his own species; but the Dean, it would appear, only estimated people by their heads, and paid but little regard to real goodness of heart.

Had he reflected on that dignity of thought expressed in his own sermon on the Trinity, he must have seen human nature

nature elevated far above that of the brute creation; but I suppose he took the picture of his Yahoo from his own feelings, when he wrote his ode upon Ditton and Whiston, and some other things equally excrementitious.

Jean Jaques Rousseau may as deservedly be placed at the head of the exalters of human nature, as Dean Swift may be at the head of these who are the depreciators of it.—Rousseau has raised it above the angels, and the Dean has sunk it below the brutes.

I believe no body will be at a loss to say which of these extravagances indicates the best heart.—May Jean Jaques Rousseau always find men such as he has painted them; and were the other alive, were it not to wish human nature to be much

much worse than it really is, I should wish him the same fate.

Too high an opinion of mankind, though the most infallible mark of a good heart, at the same time shews that the possessor of it is but little acquainted with the world;—and on the other hand, a hatred and contempt of our own species, shews a temper either chagrined with disappointments, or too long hacknied in the ways of men.—The former of these is perhaps the case with Rousseau, and one or both of the latter I suppose happened to Dean Swift.

The learned Mr. Pope seems to have taken a more comprehensive view of our nature than any of the other two; he has described it as a compound of greatness and littleness, of vice and virtue.—This

K is

is the state in which man will naturally appear to every inquisitive and unprejudiced mind ; and perhaps it is the state in which he ought politically to be considered by every man, in his commerce and traffic with the world.

Viewing him thus, will make one just reasonably cautious against all the snares that may be laid for him by the cunning and crafty, and thereby perhaps enable him to avoid the greatest part of them, though it will be impossible to shun them all ; whereas, if he views every one as a rogue, he will be a continual slave to his own fear of being cheated ; and perhaps a transition too natural from this will be to endeavour to cheat others in his turn. —On the other hand, he who considers man as all virtue and truth, will easily become

become the dupe of every sharper, and may possibly not awake from his golden dream till he is irrecoverably ruined.

As it has happened to the species in general, so has it done to the sexes in particular; they have seldom been impartially compared with each other. A man who has reduced himself to poverty, and wore out his constitution among the venal part of the prostituted fair, roars out exclamations, when his rotten bones ach, against the whole sex.

True, said my aunt; and a woman who has been abandoned by a faithless lover,—or harshly treated by a tyrannical husband; when she calls to mind the injuries she has suffered, or what is still worse, while she is smarting under them, declaims against every thing that is mas-

culture as perfidious, surly, and domineering.

The whole of the fair sex, answered I, have always been vilified and reproached by the most unworthy part of ours, who have alledged, that they only wore a mask of virtue to cover the real baseness of their heart. But this is certainly carrying the matter infinitely too far;—we cannot judge the heart, nor discover the principles from which actions proceed;—we can only judge of actions themselves, and these of both sexes are generally open to our view.—Let us then form an idea from actions, and we will find these of the fair sex commonly less repugnant to virtue than these of ours; and if good actions are performed, and bad ones avoided, it is of little consequence to society

ciety from what motives this deportment may proceed.

The customs of our country have rendered several vices more odious in women than in men; and the natural consequence of some of their follies is more distressing to them, and on these accounts their calumniators say, that they are only restrained from them by the dread of infamy and shame, while they are more firmly attached to them in their heart; but let people who reason thus consider, that there are many vices which the fair sex might practise with the same impunity as ours, and which they are not so much addicted to.—Is this to be accounted for in any other manner than by supposing an innate principle of vir-

true, or at least a want of an inclination to vice.

But further, most of the vices of which the fair sex are guilty, are more cautiously practised, and more care is taken to hide them from the eyes of the world, than is taken to hide these practised by the men ;—though the difference here is very little with regard to the moral evil itself, yet it is very great with regard to society ; for the crimes which are done in secret do not spread the contagion of vice around them, like those that are not only practised in open day, but gloried in, and boasted of in every public company.

It will perhaps be said, that the fair sex, for any thing that we know, may boast of their licentiousness among themselves,

selves, as well as the men ; but the men in this age have arrived even a step farther than this, and many of them glory in their crimes, even in mixed companies of both sexes.—I never heard, said my aunt, any woman glory in wickedness, not even in the company of women.—I believe it, answered I, and heartily wish I could say as much for our sex.—You can say very little for them, said my aunt, reddening as she said it ; they are false and perfidious.—I knew what was beginning to arise in her breast, and therefore industriously turned the discourse upon another subject.

C H A P. IX.

*Quid de quoque vero, & cui dicas,
Sæpe caveto.*

A Mind naturally attentive to the various incidents of life, will seldom want hints to afford scope for contemplation.

It is a hard-hearted world, said a poor old woman, bowed down with age and infirmities, who sat at the corner of a street as I passed by.—It was not the thing said, but the manner of saying it, that attracted my attention ; so I stopped, and inquired the reason of her complaint.—Should not every one do the same, if he thinks it in his power to relieve it.

I just now, said she, asked but a little halfpenny out of the abundance of two fine

fine ladies who flaunted along ; but instead of granting my request, they reviled me with having been the author of my own misery, by a youth of licentious folly and indiscretion, and wished that every one of my stamp might become a spectacle to the world, without a heart to pity them. I can easily see what they took me for ; but—here a tear put a stop to what should have followed.—It was but little I had to spare ; of that little I gave a part.

This incident naturally turned my thoughts upon the feelings of the human heart.

I would despise, said I, as I passed along, I would despise the callous heart which can feel for no miseries but its own ; and I would as sincerely pity that one

one, who should be unhappy at every misfortune that should happen, not only to mankind, but to any of the other creatures.—The hardness of the first will give a sensible pain to all who are concerned with it ; and the softness of the last will be a continual torment to itself.

The Author of nature never required of me that I should weep for every death that happens in this great metropolis, or that I should set down and mourn because there are many who sink under pinching poverty,—who smart by the iron rod of oppression,—and who suffer by a nameless variety of other ills incident to life.

I may abstain from all these without meriting the appellation of hard-hearted ; —but should I not shed a tributary tear

at

at the death of my friend;—should I, being wealthy, heedlessly pass by suffering indigence;—should I, being powerful, not endeavour to rescue the slave from the hands of his merciless oppressor;—and should I wantonly sport with the wretchedness of any of the creatures who are formed by the same Almighty hand as myself, I should then deserve to be blotted out from the creation.

But though I would recommend sympathetic tenderness in the strongest manner, I would at the same time caution against carrying it so far as to degenerate into silliness.—By being compassionate we endear ourselves to all who are about us;—by being silly, we only expose ourselves to laughter and ridicule.

We

them with the greatest indifference, and frequently squeeze a million or two of them to death between their finger and thumb ; and all this havoc, not from real cruelty of disposition, but merely from inattention.—These people would certainly desist from such barbarity, would they consider that every living creature, however minute, is an organized animal, susceptible of pain and pleasure ; and that the more fine and delicate the structure of the body, perhaps the more exquisite are the sensations belonging to it.

Though the actors of this inattentive kind of cruelty are not nearly so culpable as those who take pleasure in tormenting, the effects are still no less painful to the animals who suffer by their heedlessness ; and had they for some time

a mi-

a microscopic eye, to behold the convulsive agonies of the minutest animals, it would certainly awaken their attention; —but with regard to these people who take pleasure in tormenting, purely from a principle of levity, to give it no worse name, and whose only aim in giving pain is to divert themselves with the cries and convulsive spasms of an agonizing creature,—they are lost to all reflection;—human nature only produces such monsters.

While I wrote the last sentence, I was ashamed of myself and of my species; —would to God it were not true;—I would rather be the author of twenty lies, than be obliged to own this single truth, that some of my fellow-creatures are so wretched.—However, own it I must,

must, as there are to be found, who not only sport with the miseries of other animals, but also with those of their own species ; and with that part of them too, whose circumstances entitle them to our pity and commiseration.

A human creature, who has any thing of an uncommon appearance, either by nature, accident, age, or poverty, often becomes the subject of vulgar ridicule; —and he to whom the Author of nature has denied the use of reason, we not only ridicule, but persecute.—Such an one can seldom appear in any populous city, without being in danger of losing his life, to afford amusement to the barbarity of a licentious rabble.

There is no possibility of tracing human actions up to any fixed and permanent

nent principles, so contradictory are we all to ourselves and to each other ;—and people are frequently to be met with, who are so extremely tender-hearted, that they would not upon any account inflict the least bodily pain, and yet have not the smallest reluctance at stabbing reputation, by the envenomed arrows of scandal, which give the most exquisite torture to the sensible mind.

But besides this, benevolence of heart often takes a wrong bias, and exerts itself on the most unworthy objects, while the more deserving are hardly taken any notice of.—Maria will trust her children to be fed by the servants in the nursery, while the sweet creatures, her parrot, monkey, and lap dog, must be fed by her own hand in the parlour, lest the

L servants

Servants should not be careful enough of them.

It is not enough that we are not cruel to the bodies of animals, but we ought likewise to spare the minds of these who have mental feeling.—This subject is but little considered by the greatest part of the world; and we seldom meet with any one accusing himself of having done a cruel action, if he has not wounded the body; but we should beware of wounding the mind also, upon which there are a thousand various ways of exerting our cruelty, when the body is entirely out of our reach; and I appeal to those who are endowed with the most sensible feelings, whether bodily or mental pain be supported with the greatest difficulty.

I know

I know no instance of any one ever having put an end to his life, on account of the feelings of his body;—too many have done it on account of those of the mind.—Say, ye who have suffered the loss of a leg or an arm with patience, can you bear as much to be detracted from your honour with the same fortitude;—will the same resolution support you, when your spotless innocence is blackened by an imputation of the foulest crimes.

Strong walls, and barrocaded gates, may guard our houses from the nocturnal robber;—our own strength, and the laws of our country, will often defend us from bodily insults, but against these torturers of the mind we have no security.—The envenomed shafts of slander can penetrate the thickest walls, and be

ceisfully levelled against us at any distance, by every talkative fool, to afford matter of conversation ;—or by every splenetick disposition, who sickens at the prosperity of another.—The sanative power of nature, and the assistance of art will heal a wound of the body, and the pain it once gave will soon be forgot ; but he who by hurting reputation wounds the mind, gives a pain which perhaps neither he nor time will ever be able to cure. *Verbum semel emissum volat irrevocabile.*

C H A P. X.

To trace out Nature through her various scenes.

LONG had my father and mother lived together in rural innocence ;—perhaps they were not even acquainted with the names of luxury and refinement.—My father had two brothers who lived in London ; the first was by trade a cobbler, and the second by profession a clerk or precentor to a methodist meeting ;—they both urged my father to come and live in town, that he might see the world, and taste the delicacies of life ;—now the old man was just stepping out of the world, when he thought of stepping into it.

Prevailed upon by their intreaties, my father, mother, and me, travelled up to

town, by short, but uneasy marches ;—the grasshopper is a burden to age and infirmity.

Custom is second nature ; the old people were taken from their accustomed manner of living, and soon grew uneasy ;—I will go down again, said my father, to my native country ;—but while he was deliberating, he went down to his native dust.—My mother and him had lived so long together, that they were become absolutely necessary to each other.—Their friendship had been cemented by mutual wants, and by mutual assistance in them ;—she drooped from the day he was taken from her side,—and expired in about a month after him.

I was then left helpless and destitute, to the care of the two uncles who lived in

in the same house. The first of which was a harmless, thoughtless mortal, as any one may easily judge, from his having cobbled shoes from the time he was twelve years of age, till this present day ; when at the moment I write this, he is eighty-two years, seven hours, and thirteen minutes ;—the other was a morose, sullen zealot, with an affectation of learning, which only amounted to a facility of murdering hard words.

I was about thirteen years old when I fell into the hands of these opposite tempers ; and having never been taught anything, on account of the indigence of my parents, was as rude and uncultivated as it is possible to imagine : and this occasioned a dispute between the two uncles, the first night that I lodged with

them, concerning what I should be brought up to.

My uncle Peter, (for so the cobler was called) insisted that I should be bred to mending of shoes ; my uncle Joseph, (for that was the name of the clerk) was as positive, that as I had a very melodious voice, I should be brought up to his profession ; and added, that if Providence should prove propitious to him, he would peradventure have it in his power to help me forward to be a preacher.

After a good deal of altercation upon this subject, which I do not now remember, I will go to bed, said Peter. Now the last letter of the word bed in Peter's speech, was not distinctly pronounced ; a yawning fit having come upon him just

just as he was about to finish the sentence ;—where will you go ? said Joseph ; —to bed, said Peter ;—I will do the same, said Joseph,—but remember he shall be bred to the church.

Peter got early up in the morning to work ;—Joseph was eager to have the dispute determined, not so much from any regard to me, as from his own pride, which could not bear to yield to his brother, whom he considered as so much beneath him ;—so having got up, and called Peter from the stall, and me from my hovel, we sat down to breakfast on a crust of brown loaf, and some stale beer.

Brother, said Joseph, you seemed positively determined last night, that our nephew should be brought up to your own trade ; but I thinks, with all hum-

ble submission, I have a legalious right to be consulted on this most importinant affair as well as yourself, though you be what the learned call seniar frattrim, and more especially, as you are but an illiterated cobler, and me a man of a better station, and much more learnededer, and have had more frequenter opportunities of conversing with schollards ;—and it is my opinion, as I told you last night, that he should be brought up to the church.

Peter was at this instant taking a hearty draught of the contents of a brown mug, —he was seized with a fit of laughter, and he ——— in it ; so setting it down in a haste,—And you call your conventicle a church, do you, Joseph ! a whining, canting set of rogues, too lazy to work, too proud to beg, and therefore going about

about and cheating poor ignorant people with a sanctified twang!—a pretty sort of church truly!

The brown mug had by accident lost its handle.—Joseph had at this instant taken it up between his hands, in order to have tasted its contents, but instead of doing so, he stared in Peter's face, till the last part of his speech, which was so galling, that rage and fury seized him at the affront,—his hands trembled,—the mug fell from between them,—and it fell just upon Peter's corny toe.

Peter started up and roared like a bull, —Joseph started up too,—but his tongue was so much convulsed with rage, that he could not speak; so he ran out holding up both his hands, and turning up his eyes.

Peter

Peter was all this time jumping about the floor upon one foot, and holding the other in his hand.—When the pain was a little abated, he began to look about him, and beheld, to his unspeakable grief, the shattered remains of the only utensil in his house ;—the sight affected him,—he put down the foot he had been holding in his hand,—walked up to the mug, and taking up a piece of it,—what shall I now get that will answer so many different purposes as you have done, said he,—so he sighed, and threw the piece down again.

Then addressing himself to me, come my boy, said he, I am all the father you now have, and I will provide genteely for you.—I will make you the best cobler in town ;—you shall never be taught to draw

draw out a long face, and a longer twang, to procure a precarious and dishonest livelihood, while I have it in my power to learn you a trade that will make you as independent as a lord ;—you are now of a proper age for learning, and I have a great deal of work by me.

While this was transacting at home, Joseph was abroad enquiring for a place to put me into, where I might be educated in his own principles, but having met with no success, he returned about one o'clock.—I was then working ;—when he saw me, he immediately grew frantic, and exclaimed against Peter and his trade in the most scurrilous manner ;—Peter whistled a tune.—

This most effectually silenced Joseph.—Peter seizing the opportunity, proposed

posed going to dinner.—Joseph sat down at the table, without saying a word;—look ye, brother, said Peter, there is that there boy has gained threepence-halfpenny this forenoon, and in a little time will be able to gain double the sum;—now, Joseph, if he should follow your plan, it will at least take several years to enable him to gain one single halspenny; and besides, you know I am already at more than half the expence of maintaining you, and how can you expect that I should burthen myself with another religious drone.

Just as Peter was pronouncing the words religious drone, Joseph was biting a piece from his crust.—His jaws lost the power of motion, and his upcast eyes stood fixed in their hollow orbits;—the crust

crust dropped upon the table ;—Joseph arose with a supercilious air, and walked out muttering, Religious drone !—at half the expence of maintaining me !—It was a watching night among his fraternity, so we saw no more of him till the next morning.

The brown mug was broke,—there was not another utensil in the house.—Joseph, said Peter, while we were fitting down to breakfast, as your profession makes you a gentleman, and as gentlemen are generally rich, pray buy another mug for us.—You would be affronted, should a cobler pretend to treat a gentleman.—Joseph had no money, so he coloured, and turning about, lifted an old brush, and gave two or three rubs to an older hat.

Perhaps

Perhaps, reader, you have done a more ridiculous thing than this, when you have been put to the blush, in order to gain a little time to recover yourself.

We got a mug from the tavern ;—Joseph sat down again ; but said he had no appetite. Peter and me breakfasted, and went to our stall.—When we were gone, his appetite grew better, so he ate up his luncheon of bread, and drank what was left in the mug ; then having read two or three chapters of Job, and a part of a sermon on humility, and put himself as he imagined, into a calm temper ; he came into the stall.

He sat down at Peter's right hand,—and having stroked his cravat,—Brother, said he, we have always been too warm in our disputes about this boy ; I am now come

come to reason the matter with Christian meekness ; and, as I told you before, must establish it as a perlimanory, to which I hope you will assaint, that at least some small diferince is due to me as a gentleman, who am much more learned, and knows much more of the world than any cobler, whose whole ideas are concentricated and constricticated within the narrow circle of a stall and a neighbouring alehouse ;—I therefore hope, brother, that you will hear me with patience. Peter gave a nod.— Would it not be a pity, brother, to make the boy a cobler, for no other reafon than because you can learn him that trade, when I can with the same facilitation learn him to be a gentleman like myself.

M

A pretty

A pretty sort of a gentleman! cried Peter, who, though he despises a cobler, is obliged to live upon him!—Nay, as that, answered Joseph; I do you an honour to converse with you, and could live as facilitously without you.—Are your gross corporal things of such importence to me!—I despise them and all terrestrial vanities!—So do not I, said Peter; but I wish you would speak plain English, for I do not understand your fine words.

Now, brother, you have at last confessed your ignorance, said Joseph; and why would such an illiterate creature presume to ratiocinate with one who has such perheminecy over him!

Peter had hitherto been tolerably attentive; but now finding Joseph grow still more unintelligible, he laid hold of his ends

ends in a passion, and giving them a jerk with all his force, they both gave way, and his right hand struck Joseph on the mouth, and fairly knocked out three of his fore teeth.—Joseph roared, and tumbled from his seat; Peter stared;—the neighbours flocked into the stall.

Peter thought he had only given Joseph a slight wound on the lip, at which he began to laugh; but when he perceived that the three teeth were lost, he turned pale.—Poor man, said he, I have disabled him from raising any more tunes, and he is too fine a gentleman to work, so I shall have him to maintain.—Oh what I have brought upon myself!

Joseph was put to bed;—Peter ran to the next dram shop, and treated him with a quartan of gin.

Excess of grief and pain have generally been reckoned inimical to sleep; there are, however, some writers who have mentioned people having slept for sorrow. Whether it was owing to sorrow, or to gin, I know not, but Joseph soon fell into a doze.

During his recovery, while he imagined he could not go abroad with impunity, he frequently came into the stall, and always seated himself in the most distant corner, from the extension of Peter's arms, nor ever failed to let down a piece of old canvas, which served as a curtain to a window, or rather hole in the stall; this he pretended was to prevent the air from affecting his mouth, but the real design of it was to prevent his being seen in a place that he was ashamed of.

Though

Though Peter had lost his brown mug, and suffered a violent contusion on his corney toe;—though Joseph had lost three of his fore teeth, upon which his bread depended, in the quarrel about me, yet they were both equally inclined to renew it.

Brother, said Joseph, one day as he sat by us, I have just been thinking how ridiculous it is in you to insist upon breeding that boy to be a cobbler, which is of all trades the most despicable.—Peter reddened at this speech, and snatching up a knife to pare the sole of a shoe which he was mending, in the agitation of his mind, he pared a large slice from the upper leather also.—Do not spoil the shoe, uncle, said I. Peter observed what

he had done, and threw it upon the floor in a passion.

Would you were abroad again at your canting conventicle, cheating old women and servant maids for a beggarly livelihood! said he, for I am sure that not a single stitch of work has prospered in my hands since I have been so much plagued with your company.—Of all people in the world, an enthusiastic zealot is the hottest headed, when the tenets which he and his party espouse are derided.—Every joint of Joseph began to tremble at this speech, and in a moment every drop of his irracible blood flew to his face.—Rage must vent itself upon something;—he was afraid to vent it upon Peter, who was much stronger than

than himself, so he began to tear down the old canvas, and destroy every thing within his reach.

Peter started up, no less inflamed when he saw all that he had in the world going to destruction. The mind always, when enraged, points out the nearest way to the object of revenge.—Peter was jumping over a table that stood between them ; but unfortunately setting his foot upon the point of an awl which stood fixed upright in a case, it pierced the sole of his foot, and came out at the upper part of it.—The table tumbled down against Joseph's shins,—Peter tumbled along with it, and lay upon his body, by all which he was firmly wedged into the corner.—Joseph roared,—Peter swore.—My legs are broke, cried Joseph ;—

My foot is ruined, cried Peter. So the noise brought the neighbours about us again, and they relieved Joseph from his corner, and Peter from the awl in his foot.

I stole out in the hurry, and with much difficulty found the way back to the place of my nativity.

C H A P-

C H A P. XI.

*Terrificam capit is concus sit terque quaterque
Cæsariem; cum qua terram, mare, sidera movit.*

JUST as I had finished the last chapter, My cousin Jefsemy Pennyless entered the room.— Now Jefsemy is reckoned by much the wisest man, and the best scholar of any in the family.

Great things often arise from small beginnings.— His great-grandfather was seven years footman to the illustrious poet laureat Colley Cibber.

Having taken up the chapter, and glanced it over, he shook his head. I trembled as he did it.

Now shaking of the head in a particular manner has always been accounted a sign.

sign of the most profound wisdom; and no wonder, since we have the strongest reasons to persuade us, that it was originally derived from Jupiter himself, who in the councils of the gods often used to nod his assent; and hence the phrase so often prostituted,—*summo numine annunte*,—he shook his head.—Indeed this will never do, Peter, said he, the scene is too low; it is a disgrace to our whole family; and besides, there is too much fighting and quarrelling in it. It will never please the philanthropist, to whom it would appear you have chiefly addressed yourself in your other lucubrations.

The children of a man's own brain are even dearer to him than these of his loins.—There is not an irritable nerve in
his

his constitution which does not rise in indignation, if they are slighted.—Mine were immediately agitated. — I must write from nature, said I, in an angry tone; and besides, I copy from numerous examples, as the whole history of mankind, from Cain down to the present time, is nothing but one continued scene of quarrelling and destruction.

Too much so indeed, said Jeffemy, would I were not obliged to confess it; for we see the useful arts, which tend either to support our bodies, or aggrandize our minds, are but little taken notice of in the history of any country.—The man (if I can call him so) who massacres or enslaves a nation, is handed down to posterity loaded with encomiums, while he
who

who endeavours to make it happy is neglected while living, and forgot when dead.

Military and civil honours are most frequently bestowed upon him whose trade is destruction, and the art of spreading death and desolation, is reckoned the gentlest of all others.—Thus multitudes aspire after the names of Hero, and Patriot ;—but they are scourges to humanity.—The first is a madman, who for the sake of false glory, plunder, or power, deals out horror and depopulation to his species ;—the second is a narrow-minded little pigmy, whose constant aim is to aggrandize one little spot of that creation which belongs to one common parent, at the expence of all the

the rest * ; and yet this last has been extolled in all nations for his godlike virtues, as if it were a property of the Deity to make one part of his creation great and happy, by the misery and subjection of all the other parts of it.

Here Jeffemy finished his speech, and here I intended to give a nod of assent, being always fond of imitating my betters ;—but as I am at present but a novice in the management of this most honourable part of the masculine gender, I happened to give it three or four shakes, which it seems signifies dissent.

* The author does not mean here the patriot who delights to defend his country, or enrich it by trade and industry ; but him who, without any legal or natural right, endeavours to bring all others under subjection to it.

One thoroughly acquainted with human nature, easily discovers when the feelings of the mind and the motions of the body disagree.—Jeffery saw that I had not expressed what I intended.—You are wrong, Peter, said he.—I am sorry for it, said I. The proper management of the head is one of the most difficult points in life; and since these of the greatest sages have often been caught nodding at an improper time*, it is no wonder that mine should shake at an improper one.

Since this mistake, I have made the discipline of the head my peculiar study, and shall communicate to the public a few of the observations I have made upon it.

• Aliquando dormit bonus Homerus.

I shall

I shall begin these with the Physician, the exterior appearance of whose head is perhaps more useful to him than to any other profession.— When he shakes it, death, danger, or disapprobation of the apothecary who has prescribed for the patient before him, is signified ; though some alledge, that he often shakes it only to make the by-standers believe that there is danger, in order that his skill may be the more magnified if the patient recovers.

When the Lawyer shakes his head, it intimates that your cause is at last doubtful, if not desperate. My cousin Jessemy finds fault with this observation, and alleges that every cause is desperate, in whatever manner your council manage his head.

The

The Parson shakes his reverend head over the pulpit, when he is endeavouring to frighten his audience into repentance ;—and the enthusiastic part of the audience below shake their heads in return, when the parson lets fall upon them what they call a weighty truth.

Almost every one shakes his head, when he hears another tell a very marvellous and improbable story, which he dare not flatly contradict, though this shaking of the head signifies the same thing.

The sour churlish Preceptor shakes his head, when he wants to frighten naughty boys from doing mischief ; and the nurse and other old women do the same, when they want to terrify them with raw head and bloody bones.

The Prude erects her head when she looks at these odious creatures the men, or at the still more odious ones of her own sex, who are fond of them.

The Coquette tosses her head perpetually, and the motions of it are the same upon all occasions; so there does not seem to be any possibility of understanding them.

The modest girl sometimes hides her head in your bosom,—This is easily understood.—My cousin says, that it is the only motion of the female head that perfectly corresponds with the feelings of the heart.—However that be, it is a motion that effectually communicates another of a kind not very easy to be described, to every motive particle within the bosom upon which it is leaned.

N

I am

I am perfectly wearied with relating the various motions of heads, which I intend to enumerate and explain in a more ample and elaborate manner afterward; shall therefore conclude this essay with remarking, that the Beau—dresses the outside of his head.

C H A P.

C H A P. XII.

— Et amor secleratus habendi.

IF I had just this, said I, as I was reading an account in a news-paper, of a gentleman who had married an agreeable young lady, with a fortune of ten thousand pounds,—if I had just this, I would journey cheerily through life,—a complaint should not be uttered from my mouth,—and I would endeavour even to prevent those of other people ;—the hungry should not go unsatisfied from my door,—nor should the naked curse me while he sat shivering over a few dying embers, and the rude storm rattling on his ragged roof ;—I would, said I, be a father to the fatherless,—a husband to

the widow,—and I would,—but here a sympathetic tear stopped further utterance; it had no power over the flowings of my heart,—I thought I would make all around me happy.

The wish was a kind of prophetic one, Providence intended to put my virtue to the trial;—I had just finished the paragraph, and thrice wiped my eyes with a white cambric handkerchief;—it was from thee, Almira, I received it, wet with the chrystral drops which had fallen for the death of an indulgent father,—they have never yet been washed from it,—nor shall they ever mix with the stream while I possess it, but I will add a few more to them as often as all powerful nature shall call them from my eyes.—

I had

I had just finished the paragraph, when the postman brought me a letter, informing me that my brother Jacob, who had emigrated to the East Indies, in order to get into some other family, had died and left me ten thousand pounds.

When I had finished the letter, I lifted up my white cambric handkerchief which I had laid on the table,—I lifted it,—and put it in my pocket.

When I had read an account of the death of a brother ; when I had taken up my white cambric handkerchief, had I not informed the reader what I did with it, he would naturally have concluded, that I used it either to wipe a tributary, or at least a fashionable tear from my cheek ;—I did neither.

There is nothing more difficult than to

give a reason for every thing that happens ; I think, however, that I can give two for this.

For there are two circumstances which render the mind less susceptible of the natural feelings upon the death of any relation :—the first is, when we hardly know, and never were intimate with the deceased ;—and the second is, when he leaves any thing behind him valuable enough to occupy the mind so much, as to divert the melancholy feelings which would otherways arise on the occasion.

Now both these circumstances concurred in the present case ;—Jacob had begun his peregrinations in the 17th year of his age, while I was yet a child ;—our acquaintance had hardly ever begun, nor was it carried on by partaking of mutual

mutual diversions, sharing of mutual hopes and fears.—Thus he was unto me as an alien, and not as a brother ;—and moreover, he had left me as much as would have made many rejoice at the death of a brother, who had been brought up with him as such.

I had asked two or three of my neighbour's to sup with me ; but I now wished I had not done it, on account of the expence.—Tell me, Nature, what it is, for I could never yet discover it,—tell me what it is that contracts the heart on the acquisition of wealth.

I am now no more of the family of penniless, said I, I am a gentleman, and I will live as a gentleman ; so I leaned my head backwards on the chair, and began to plan out a scheme for my future conduct in life.—After I had turned

it this way, and that way, and in short every way that I could of,—it would not do.

I will go to bed, said I, a comfortable nap will refresh my mind, and the will make it do in the morning.—So I laid me down, and turned me to this side, and to that side,—and put myself into this position, and the other position, —but I could not get the nap I wanted, —nor would the scheme go out of my head.

It was a maxim among the stoic philosophers, and adopted by many people as a dernière ressource, to bear courageously up against the tide of misfortunes ;— while my blood and spirits rushed warmer into my veins, than at this present moment, when they can hardly crawl along.

I was

I was fond of this method, but I generally found it was spending my strength in vain ;—I have therefore long since adopted a quite different one, which is, to lay myself supinely on the surface of the stream, and swim spontaneously with the tide ; when a rock or precipice seems to fall in my way, I paddle myself to one side of it with a leg or an arm, and always give myself as little trouble on the occasion as possible.

I took this method in the present case, and since the scheme would not go out of my head, resolved to let it continue there as long as it pleased ;—so I prosecuted it all night, and about nine o'clock in the morning had fixed on a plan.—I had no sooner fixed upon it, than I got out of bed, wrote it down upon a piece of paper,

paper, with my annual income upon one column, and my expence upon the other, when to my great mortification, I found that the expence, as I had planned it, would be exactly seven pounds, thirteen shillings, and sixpence halfpenny above my income.

I then run over all the other plans which I had thought of during the night;—there were none of them that would answer; and this could not be executed upon one single farthing less than I had estimated it at.

Had I just this seven pounds, thirteen shillings and sixpence, said I, it would make me compleatly happy.

So I began to revolve in my mind, with the utmost eagerness, how I should obtain it.—I will conceal, said I, my having

having got the money for a year, it will then amount to ten thousand five hundred, which will easily bring matters to bear.—On further reflection this would not do;—I had told the story the night before, and it was flying about among all the neighbours.

While I was in this dilemma, the maid came to tell me that old Peter was at the door.—Now Peter, on account of his name, was a weekly pensioner, on whom I had long been accustomed to bestow a penny every Saturday morning, the girl had told him of my good fortune,—and he, no doubt, had reckoned something upon it;—bid him go about his business, said I, in an angry tone;—but my heart smote me as I said it,—and I remembered the promises I had been making when I received

ceived the letter.—Just heavens! is it thus, said I, that we sport with the vows which we make in your hearing;—I will go this moment and give him sixpence at least.

So I put my hand in my pocket, and walked hastily to the room door;—Peter, said Avarice, while I was going out at it, and had got the sixpence ready, you are at this present moment short of your reckoning seven pounds, thirteen shillings and sixpence halfpenny, and yet you are going like a fool to give away your money.

At this very instant old Peter bowed to me with a most piteous countenance;—the look, methought, seemed to cry aloud;—this is what I did not expect.—I stood in the door, agitated between

two violent passions ;—charity bade me reach out my hand and give it,—avarice contracted it,—so I would give it,—and I would not give it ;—Peter saw my distress, and modestly walked out, and shut the street door behind him.

He was no sooner gone than I cursed him for departing ; was convinced that I would have given it him if he had staid ; and laid all the blame upon his precipitate retreat, which ought naturally to have fallen on the badness of my own heart.

I put up the sixpence,—walked into the room again, and sat down to breakfast ;—there were two things that embarrassed me so much that I could not eat, —the first was the want of the seven pounds, thirteen shillings and sixpence halfpenny,

halfpenny,—and the second was the figure of old Peter, which presented itself to my imagination, sitting shivering in his hovel, through every cranny of which the bleak winds were whistling, and playing in his hoary locks, while he was every now and then casting a melancholly look around him, in quest of something to rekindle the poor remains of a fire just expiring, and with a despairing eye, exploring every corner for a scanty crust, or any thing to allay his raging appetite.

Methought when he had in this manner rummaged the whole hovel, and could find nothing either to mitigate his cold or hunger, that he sat down upon his chair, leaned his head upon his hand, turned up his eyes to heaven, and gave a sigh ;—the sigh I thought was accompanied

panied with a curse upon me, for having denied his usual boon ;—what will become of him, said I, he must expire before Monday ; so I took out the sixpence, and looking at it,—may no person ever suffer so much from the want of you as he just now does,—nor any ever feel so sharp a pang for possessing you as I do, said I.

Perhaps all that has now passed before me may be an allusion, said I, and he may at this instant be begging at the corner of a street, from somebody as hard-hearted as myself ;—so I will go immediately and find him out, and if I do not find him, I will find plenty of others to bestow something upon, who may be in as much want ; so I put eleven shillings and nine pence into my pocket, and went

went out, resolved to bestow every farthing of it in charity before I should return.

I had got but a little way from my own door, when I saw a poor man at a distance, standing in a suppliant posture,—my niggard heart revolted against all the resolutions I had made,—it is he, said I, and I must give away my money, although I have already seven pounds thirteen shillings and six-pence halfpenny per annum too little.—When I approached the man, and found it was not him, my heart rejoiced within me as I passed by.

In going through several parts of the town, I met a variety of objects of charity; but I industriously kept from looking at any of them, lest pity should overcome avarice, and force a passage into my

my heart.—While I shunned every other beggar, I would have persuaded myself that I wanted to meet Peter ;—but it was only a pretence,—for I got home with every farthing of the money in my pocket which I had carried out.

A semblance of virtue will often stifle the monitor within us.—I had done my duty, I thought, with regard to Peter, and if I had not given him the money at first, nor found him out now, it was not my fault; so I sat down to dinner, and began to consider how I should get the seven pounds thirteen shillings and six-pence per annum that I wanted.

On Sunday, at church, my head was full of it ;—it was full of it all the week, till the Friday evening, when I came home and found another letter

O upon

upon my table, informing me that my brother's effects had turned to much better account than was expected, and that instead of ten, I should at least get twenty thousand pounds.—I will double the plan I had formed before, said I, and then I shall appear somebody;—but in order to do this, I shall want fifteen pounds seven shillings;—if I had just this, I should undoubtedly be happy.

There are no limits to avarice.—I now spent as uneasy a night, contriving how to acquire this fifteen pounds seven shillings, as I had done before on account of the half of it.—I arose about eight o'clock in the morning, and taking hold of the right knee of my breeches, in order to put them on, all the money in the pocket of them fell upon the floor.—

On

On gathering it up, and counting it, I found exactly the eleven shillings and nine-pence.—I never carried money so long before, said I, without parting with some of it.

O conscience!—conscience! however we may endeavour to stifle thee, thou art a faithful monitor, and will be perpetually endeavouring to rouse us from an indulgence of our crimes.—When I saw the money untouched, Thou told me I had done amiss,—and I listened to what thou told me.

When I had but little to spare, said I, I always gave a part of that little; and never till I became possessed of much, did I carry a sum so long undiminished in my pocket;—but I will now atone for my fault. While I said this, I felt benevolence

volence rushing warm into my heart ;—there is nothing better than to hit a lucky moment.—Now Peter at this very moment hit the door with the knocker ; and as it was about the usual time of his coming, the sound of the knocker hit my heart.

You, said I, looking at the eleven and nine-pence in my hand,—you shall pay the forfeit of my crimes.—Long have you shut out every social feeling from my heart ; but you shall never have it in your power to do so again ;—so I sent the old man away rejoicing.

T H E E N D.





146

LEPOX LIBRARY



Duyckinck Collection.
Presented in 1878.